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IRISHMEN

AND

IRISHWOMEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HYACINTH O'GARA;" "IRISH PRIESTS AND ENGLISH LANDLORDS," &c. &c.

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IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN.

CHAPTER I.

It was the fair day of Derrynaslieve, an inconsiderable village in one of the north-west counties of Ireland. The weather was favourable, and though prices were low, and consequently but little business transacted, still there was a large concourse of people, and a good deal of noise and bustle. Besides those who resorted to it for the purpose of buying and selling, there was, as usual, a large assemblage of idlers, of both sexes, and all ages; who, singly, or in small parties, sauntered up and down the principal, or indeed the only street: at one time, tumbling over the goods exposed for sale in the different booths, cheapening articles which they had no money to purchase; now congregating round a lame man, in a sailor's dress, who sung the poetical story of his own disasters; and then taking their stand on the raised paved-way before the door of some public-house, staring at the passengers, or valuing the various purchases of their acquaintances.

Among the numbers thus employed, one group was eminently conspicuous for the indefatigable perseverance with which they lounged through the whole extent of the fair-ground. It consisted of a tall, elderly man, in a long, grey frieze coat, followed by a tall, elderly woman, in a long, blue mantle; close after whose heels came a tall girl, in a red shawl, and a drab-coloured cloak thrown over one arm. They had all the same slingeing, heavy gait; all, the same vacant look, and the same indiscriminate curiosity, which was attracted by any thing, however common, and never satisfied till after the most minute inspection. No obstruction impeded their progress, which, though slow, was sure. They kept on their straight-forward course, undisturbed in the middle of a drove of unruly pigs, or in the more perilous encounter of a score of long-horned bullocks; and even when the mail-coach horn caused a general scamper to the right and left, the movement by which they avoided the wheels, within a hair's breadth of their feet, was imperceptible—the old lady calmly continuing her conversation over her shoulder with her daughter, as she measured on her finger the shawl which had already been subjected three times to the same operation in the course of the day; while her husband as composedly compared a piece of velveteen, just bought by a neighbour, with the material of the same stuff forming the collar of his own coat. During their peregrination, they assisted in making every bargain, and examined every article within reach of their hands, and had a word for every body, whether stranger or acquaintance, alternately speaking in English or Irish, according to the education of

their hearers. As the day advanced, and all the novelties of the fair were pretty well exhausted, their progress gradually slackened. They made longer pauses, apparently at a loss to know what to do with themselves; sometimes giving but a passing glance at the various objects, which had before engrossed so much of their attention; now and then stopping to read a stanza of the sailor's lament, and other ballads, which they had purchased; and at length, as if fairly tired out, they stopped before the window of what was formerly, in vulgar parlance, called the apothecary's shop, but now professed, in large letters of blue and gold, to be the New Medical Hall.

"Look at Christie Balf, and his wife and daughter," said a man at the opposite side of the street, who was tying up his yarn, which he had in vain offered for sale. "I am attending every fair and market in the country these thirty-four years, and I never once missed them, to my knowledge, all that time, stravaguing about, just as you see them now, whether they had business in it, or no."

"You're out in your reckoning, Billy," said a neighbour. "His long daughter, Margaret, there, isn't passing twenty; and, to my mind, Christie himself wasn't married as far back as you say, for his oldest child is only the same standing as my brother Tom."

"Pah! man," replied the other, "what is a handful of years, one way or other? I know what I know, any how, that the first market I ever stood in Carrickgombrosna, thirty-four years ago last Patrickmas, Christie was in it. I wont be sure of the wife then, but she soon was after him; and then the childer

soon began to flock after her, till they were all married, only her in the red shawl, there."

"Ileen," said he, turning to a girl loaded with gingerbread and apples, fairings from the young men, among whom she appeared to have a very general acquaintance, "it would be as well for you, if you had company down that lonesome road, after you pass the castle; and you know it's as short for me to go home by Kiladarne, as any other way."

"I'm for ever obliged to you, Billy," answered Ileen; "but I wouldn't be after keeping you, by no means, seeing it may be late before I get going. I've a trifle of tape to buy for the mistress, not counting a crooked comb for myself. Besides, there will be plenty going my way, and I can be at no loss. Still, I am not the less thankful to you, Billy. Put them apples and cakes into your pocket for the childer—they'll be looking for a fairing, poor things, and it would be a pity to baulk them."

"Ileen," said her friend, "I have a wish for you. as I had for your father before you. You are young and innocent, and have a cheerful way with you, that makes every body fond of your company. You ought to take care of yourself, girl. You make too much freedom with one that's come of people there's no trusting; and though he has smooth talk enough, and there is no disparagement to his manners, as far as I see; yet, take an advice from a friend, Ileen, dear, and keep your distance with him. You know who I mean."

"Never fear me," she replied, gaily. "There's no harm in a merry heart, Billy Kilroy. I couldn't be dark, if I had a hundred pound to my portion: and,

as for them you reflect upon, there's worse in the world. Though, after all, what need I care who's bad, or who's good, when I have nothing to say to them? Ho! come back here, you, Murtagh Cummusky," calling to a man, who, with his tinkers' budget on his back, was trudging fast down the street. "No wonder you are ashamed to look me in the face, after the way you treated the mistress; keeping her own tay-kittle in agitation this ever so long, when all it wants is to solder the handle, that is coming off as fast as it can. What will you say for yourself, when I am scalded out of my life, by your dallying?"

"Only keep a steady hand," said the tinker, "till the day after to-morrow, when, if I'm alive, I'll make the kittle better than new. Never bleeve me, but I couldn't call since I hard I was wanting, being up the country, with my hands fuller than they could hold."

"You're foully belied, Murtagh," she answered, with the same good-humoured manner, "if you haven't more ways nor one of turning a penny. The people has it, that you are a cliver hand at mending a gun, and fire-arms of that sort."

"Why will you be speaking so foolishly, out before the whole fair?" said Cummusky, angrily, "and no knowing who is listening. What business has any one to fault a struggling man, for helping himself as well as he can, these hard times? I do nothing I am afraid or ashamed of, only I don't like to have lies go out on me."

"Don't be angry, Murtagh. I thought you was one would take a joke, you are so fond of giving one. I'll say no more, if it vexes you; so, like a good boy,

don't delay the kittle; for it's the greatest heart-scald I ever had, since the hour I was born."

"You are too free with your tongue, and remember I tell you, you'll bring trouble on yourself, Ileen, if you haven't a thought," said Kilroy, as the tinker walked sulkily away. "The times requires a man to look about him, and only to see straight before him You ought'nt repeat what you hear, or pass a remark on what don't concern you. The law of the country is very strict, and nobody is safe from his own brother, if he goes beyant it."

Kilroy was stopped in his good-natured lecture, by the approach of the Balf family, who, having exhausted all the wonders of the Medical Hall window, crossed the street to condole with him on his ill-luck with his yarn.

"Troth, Mr. Balf," sighed he, "the world's gone to the bad entirely. Here I lost my whole day, trying to sell my wife's little industry—herself lying weak enough at home—and I wasn't offered the first cost of the flax, let alone any thing for the labour and spinning."

"There's others as bad off as yourself, and worse, too, Billy," cried an old woman, who then joined the party, driving a pig before her, tied by one of the hinder legs with a hay rope, the other end of which she held in her hand. "What do you think I was offered for this elegant slip?—Just eight shillings, when, last year, I sold the fellow of it for five-and-twenty."

"It's a good pig for its size, sure enough," said Christie, handling the animal all over, in spite of its

manifest dislike of such treatment, intimated by kicking and squeeling most outrageously.

"It's a good pig, in troth, Alice," repeated Mrs. Balf, also handling it scientifically, "and trouble enough you had to rear it. But whatever is come over the world, there's no luck to any body. There's Mr. Oglandby's fine bullocks walked home again to the Carragh, without any one so much as axing them what brought them here."

"Little matter about him," said the old woman, crossly; "let him kill them and eat them all himself. What luck could he have after turning out his poor tenants, without a roof over their heads, or a bit to put in their mouths? If I'm not out in my reckoning, he'll sup sorrow for that turn, before long."

"Better not to be reckoning, Alice," said Christie, looking round him anxiously. "Here's Father Duff coming up the street, and you know he's a man loves pace, and warns his flock not to be thinking bad thoughts, nor speaking bad parables."

"What bad was I thinking, or what bad was I speaking, to be threatened with the priest, Mr. Balf? What bad is there in it, if the poor won't lie down to be ground to powder, by them that keeps their lawful right from them? Father Duff is one of the ould stock, that lets the world take its course, afraid of bringing himself into trouble. And sign's on it, he is letting others get all the respect and duty he might have kept, if he took the part of the wronged."

"I'd be sorry to have your bad word, Alice," said Balf; "but I can't let that go with you about Father Duff; for don't I know, myself, that it was another world, when they were all like him. Neighbours then

lived in friendship and good-will with other, and a man wasn't careful what he'd say by his own fire-side. Now, if it isn't a poor life one has between all sides. When one is willing to be *quite*, and take the world asy, it won't do. One must have a hand in what's going on, or lead the life of a mad dog—and what's more, the breath in one's body isn't safe."

"Times will mend soon," said Alice, in a low voice. "The committee will clear the country—they will, blue as you look. It's out of the power of the gentlemen, and of the poliss—aye, and of the army, too, to say again them; and when we are up, what's to hinder goodness being plenty? Every body's hand will be wanted to help; and if them that stands back now, and shows no good-will to the cause, should happen upon a trifle of mischance, who's to blame for that, Mr. Balf?"

"Christie, come away," said his wife, endeavouring to conceal her alarm, by speaking fast. "I'm fairly foundered, tramping about all the day; and the clouds will be dark before we get home, make what haste we may."

"It's time for me to be going, too," said Alice—"and wasn't it lucky that I lit upon you, Ileen, to be with me to the very door? You'll be good help to me to drive this troublesome brute, that is more wilful and cross-grained than all the pigs in the parish put together."

"I'll be after you, Alice, but I couldn't go this minute—my business isn't near done. I've a bit of tape to buy for the mistress; and plenty of rummaging I'll have before I get what I want, she's so curious about tape. You may as well be going on—you won't

be at the Old Forth till I'm up with you; only don't stop for me, as there's no knowing how long I may be kep, with all I have to do.'

"If you're waiting for any body, Ileen, you'll have to stop longer nor might be agreeable to the mistress. I was speaking to him just now, the other side of the bridge, and he has something in hand will keep him far in the evening. So, if that's all your hindrance, come along, and blessings on you, give me a help with this one."

"Sure I told you," said the other, "that it is unpossible for me to quit it, without the tape; and supposing I was waiting for any body, small blame to me for wishing other company besides yourself and your pig—all the while meaning no disrespect to one or other. Why don't you bring Lanty with you, and make some use of him, instead of letting him sit on the wall the whole day, frightening the crows?"

"When you're axed your advice," growled Alice, kicking her pig on before her, "you're welcome to give it. The child got better rearing nor yourself; and if you don't drop some of your ways, you'll come to the wall yet, I tell you."

The Balfs had by this time moved down the street homeward. Kilroy was already out of sight; and when Alice took her departure, Ileen again crossed the fair-ground, and was proceeding at a quick pace in the direction of the bridge, when she was arrested in her career by an elderly man, who, with a voice of authority, inquired why she was not half way home by that time.

"The neighbours," he continued, "have all quit the place before this, and here you are, taking your

diversion, as if you had nothing to do at home! More than that, is it a proper thing for the like of you to be walking four miles, all alone by yourself, this time of evening, with the roads full of drunken men and stavaguers, that a dasent girl would shun as she would poison?"

"Sure I must do my business," she replied, "or what use in my coming to the fair at all? I've a bit of tape to buy for the mistress, and it was as well to wait till now, being the best time for a bargain. I'll slip in to Dinnis Devin's this minute, who is remarkable for tape. Then, as for company, Alice O'Neil and her pig is watching for me near the big Forth, so I'll be at no loss for a care-keeper."

"You were never at a loss for an answer," said her master; "but if Alice is with you you're safe enough. Mind," he added, calling after her as she entered the shop, "be home in no time like another, or you'll hear more about it."

The bargain with Dennis Devins was quickly made, and Ileen, after reconnoitering from the shop door, to be sure that the coast was clear, again sallied out; but instead of obeying her master's injunctions as to returning home, still proceeded in the contrary direction. She crossed the bridge in haste, and did not slacken her pace till she had reached the last house on that side of the village, when, apparently at a loss she as quickly retraced her steps, and stopped in the middle of the bridge for a few minutes, alternately giving a long, tip-toe look on either side.

"Ah! Jenny, dear!" said she to a woman, who had stopped to adjust her numerous bundles, "did you see any body at all coming down the back lane?"

"Can't you as well ax me if I have my eye-sight, at once?" returned Jenny. "Sure I'd be blinder nor my father's blind mare, if I couldn't see plenty of people, when the place is throng with them."

"I thought," said Ileen, carelessly, "that maybe you might tell me whereabouts Biddy St. Leger is. She borrowed my thimble near a month ago, and I'm fairly lost for want of it. If I could see her, or her mother, or her sister, or any one belonging to her, it wonld be greatly in my way, for this finger is racked to no end, when I take the needle in my hand."

"If you only want to send her word," said her friend, "you can be at no loss; for Connel himself, and his comrade, Wat Delahunt, was this minute buying powder for blasting, at Mr. Siggins's: if you make haste, you'll be up with them before they turn the corner."

"Blessings on you, Jenny," said the damsel, again moving briskly on; "I'll never rest till I get it back again; for nobody that hasn't to sew shop-linen without a thimble, knows what trouble is."

The object of her search was, at length, happily attained. The two young men were just leaving the shop as she arrived; and she instantly commenced an attack, half in jest, half in earnest, upon him who seemed to be the elder of the two, accusing him of breaking his promise, and delaying her till that time of the evening.

"Don't be angry, Ileen, and all for nothing, too; for how can a man help it, if he can't be as good as his word. Besides, didn't I bid Alice tell you not to wait, seeing how I mightn't be able to leave it till too late for you?"

"Maybe it was her pig you gave the message to," replied Ileen, gaily; "for the brute was the civilest of the two when I spoke to them. But," suddenly changing her tone and manner, "night work is bad work, Connel, and your name is up for meddling in what you have no call to: come home now, and have no hand in their foolishness—leave it to them that has nothing else to do."

"The never a bit of foolishness I have in hand, Ileen; so put that out of your head, once for all. Can't a man have a little business to do, without a wonder being made of it? Ax Wat here, if I'm about any harm, barring what is right and proper."

"Why need I ax him, when I have yourself to make answer?—one that's never at a loss for words, good nor bad. So tell me this minute, Connel, what business you have at all to hinder your going home like another?"

"Isn't she the complate pattern of a minister catechizing the little boys for not going to school?" asked Connel, with a laugh, addressing his companion. "If she takes to preaching entirely, there will be no room for poor fellows like us in the country, with all the advisings we'll get."

"I'll not be put off with a joke, Connel; for it would be no joke if you brought trouble on yourself, though you went into it with a smile on your face. I once came between you and shame, when Wat Delahunt and others hadn't sense or judgment to see what was before them. And how thankful were you afterwards; and how did you promise never to go through with a job if my word was contrary to it? So give it over, whatever it is, and come along with

me, who am venturing my place and living this very minute for your sake."

"No matter if you lost your place to-morrow, Ileen, for it has ruined you. Moping with Mrs. Costigan has taken away all your life and spirits—you that was noted for never having a sour look, or a word of bad humour. But if you were my father or my mother, I couldn't give in to your fancies now. Yourself would be breaking your heart right a-head after, if I was to be said by you in this manner. Mr. Mulvaney, who has contracted for the new road, ordered me to meet him without fail this evening, to settle about that bit that runs by the Lough. If I'm not on the spot, the Finnagans will take the job over my head; and then the whole country may be married before I could scrape money enough to pay the priest, let alone building a house that I could take a dasent girl to."

He had scarcely concluded his speech, when Ileen, who had been listening rather impatiently, suddenly darted from the foot-path, and running at full speed, was out of sight in a moment, having taken to the fields, through which there was a short cut to the high road. The cause of this rapid movement was quickly explained by the appearance of her master, who, accompanied by Mr. Duff, rode slowly down the lane.

"Boys," said Mr. Costigan, when he arrived at the place where the two young men were still standing, "was that Ellen Garvey was talking to you now?"

"Is it Ellen Garvey you mean, Mr. Costigan?" asked Connel with a very civil air.

"Why, who else would I mean, when I told you

her Christian name, and her sirname, both? What way would I explain myself better?"

"She that's the widdy's daughter above the mills of Clasheen?" again inquired Connel.

"What is it to you whose daughter she is? I asked you a plain question, and I expect a plain answer before your clargy here. Was that Ellen Garvey, my girl, who run off when she caught a glimpse of me at the turn?"

"Oh! not a bit of her, Sir. It was Tim Fahy's sister. Wasn't it, Wat? She was looking for a man that owes her a trifle of change out of a firkin of butter she sold him this morning. I suppose it was the green shawl you took for Ileen, Mr. Costigan; but as for that matter, there's no end to shawls now-a-days."

"That Ellen Garvey," said her master to the priest, as they continued to ride together, "is a galloper—a rale galloper. Not that there is any harm in the girl; nor would I say a word to her miscredit, for it is a pleasure to have her in one's house, she is so cheerful and willing, and withal tender and kindly. But she is all for company-keeping, and makes more freedom than is becoming with Connel St. Leger, considering his character is none of the best."

"Young people will be foolish, Ned," answered Mr. Duff; "and she'll mend naturally when she gets old."

"Aye: but in the mean time she may light upon misfortune, if she don't mind herself; and I'd be as sorry as if she was my own child. Ah! no—it isn't the truth to say that; for you know, Mr. Duff—— Well! what's come over me, to be blundering this

way, as if a lone man, like you, could know any thing about it? But there is a feeling in the heart about one's own child, which never rises for any thing else in the world: one may be glad, and one may be sorry, for many a thing—but there is nothing like the gladness, and nothing like the sorrowfulness, that comes to a man from his own. So, you see, Mr. Duff, my meaning is, that I'd be right sorry if that foolish Ileen was to go to the bad, only through innocence; and it would be a good turn, if you gave her a check, one of these days, when you call at the house."

"I'll settle her," said the priest; "let me alone for that, Ned." And then added, with a sort of sigh, "I wish there was nothing worse among the people than what we can lay to her charge."

"You may say that," rejoined his companion, with an expressive nod; and the conversation suddenly stopped, each being apparently unwilling to continue the subject alluded to by the priest—and yet engrossed by it, so as to occupy their thoughts for a considerable time. At length, Mr. Costigan, recovering from his reverie, again addressed his fellow-traveller—

"Ah! but Mr. Duff, what will I do with my woman? Instead of better, it's worse she is growing every day. The half of her isn't in it, and she will be wore away to nothing if she goes on as she is going—and no sign of her getting better."

"Can't you take her to the salt water, Ned, where she always got her health in harvest? It may be troublesome with your hands full of business; but a

man of your substance oughtn't to stand upon a trifle of money, when a thing like that is considered."

"If she would eat gold, she might have it, and welcome," said Costigan, with great earnestness. "There's no want of good will in me to go any where, or do any thing would bring comfort to her heart; but, Mr. Duff, what good would it do a poor creature to go to that perishing place in the middle of November, when every body else is running away from it."

"That's true, Ned. I did'nt remember how far gone it was in the year; though for that matter, late or early I never had much faith in the sea, and when I recommended it, it was only for the sake of variety. Variety, Ned, is good for man and beast, and why not for woman, too?"

"And hasn't she plenty of that, Mr. Duff, if it was any use to her? Do I ever quit her side, only when my business calls me out? And do I ever stop saying the same thing to her over and over again, from the minute I get up till I lie down? Ah! Mr. Duff, it isn't flitting from one place to another will answer, when one can't leave their load behind them. It is'nt variety will please, when only one thing will content the heart; and it's a crushing-down thing to a man, when he knows he can't find *that*, travel where he may."

"It is our duty, you know, Ned, to be resigned to the will of God."

"I believe you well, Mr. Duff; but isn't it a pitiful thing when one don't know how to be resigned? I sometimes try it; and, I hope it is'nt a sin, but I

often draw down myself as a pattern to her, to show how cheerful I am, when, all the time, I am as bad as herself, only I look grave, and, now and then, talk cross to the men, when she is within hearing."

"That's all can be expected from a man like you, Ned, and you show your sense by trying to keep up your spirits. Besides, as I often told you, it is your duty, as a Christian, not to be thinking too seriously, or letting your wife's brain be running on fancies, to the neglect of her house, and things of consequence. You know, Ned," he continued, with much feeling and kindness of voice and manner—"You know, Ned, I pity you both from my heart, and that I gave you all the advice one could give another; and that if I could do any thing more, I would do it: but I know of nothing to bring peace to your mind, but to leave all in the hands of God, and then settle your thoughts as well as you can."

Poor Costigan was overcome by the kind expressions, and kinder manner of his clergyman. He could not trust his voice for some minutes; and when he did speak, it was with considerable agitation, as, in his usual rambling style, he recapitulated the story of his grief, for at least the twentieth time, to his good-natured auditor.

"I was always sure of your friendship, Mr. Duff, and that you pitied us from the bottom of your heart; and I leave it to the world, if we an't to be pitied! You know, Mr. Duff, I began the world a struggling man. I worked hard—up early, and down late, and I was content. Of an odd time, when we were young, I wont say but I used to think the place had a dull look, when the other neighbours had plen-

ty of them, and more than some of them wanted, to keep their fire-side alive. But what the eye don't see, the heart don't grieve after—so it was little trouble to me. Then, after a while, when things begun to look up about us, it was a vexation to me, at times, to think that some one who didn't care a straw about us, would get what we left behind. Still, we were easy and happy—enjoying ourselves after a careless sort of a way, being all the world to one another, and not fretting while we had plenty for ourselves, and a trifle to give to the poor, which we never missed. Well, Mr. Duff, I was now drawing into years—my wife counted forty, and something to the back of it, when we had one. It came late, and not expected, but it was the more welcome for that. It was welcome—and why shouldn't it? For I believe yourself will say, Mr. Duff, that the first lord in the land might be proud to take her on his knee, and say she belonged to him. Them four years passed like so many hours. If I was ever so tired, or ever so vexed, I forgot it all when I heard her foot on the floor, or caught a glimpse of her running about the place. It was often a surprise to myself, how a man of my age could be so new-fangled. It's one of those things there's no accounting for. Though, after all, she was not a child after the common sort. Them that had more knowledge than myself, said that; and Mrs. Milward, who, every body knows, wouldn't tell a lie to be made a queen, had a way of asking after her, that showed what she thought of her. It was no common disorder could kill that child, Mr. Duff. The doctors themselves could never tell. So it came upon us like a blow upon a man in his sleep

and it left us more like crazy, half-witted creatures, than dasent, Christian people. If I might fret comfortably about it, I would be, no comparison, the better for it; but I have to keep up before her; and after all my endeavours, she sees through me, and that encourages her to grieve. Mr. Duff, I look to you to be more sharp and positive with her, and to take no excuses if she won't alter her fashion. You can tell her she ought to be ashamed of herself, and you can say a hundred other comforting things of that kind, that would never come into the head of any man that hasn't reading and edication like you."

"I'll do my best, Ned, you may depend upon it; and I advise yourself to put away thinking, for you are nearly as far gone as the poor woman. I must now bid you good night, having to call at Toby Shea's before I go home. The day after to-morrow I will drop in upon you, and raise her heart with a little cheerful conversation."

"Do, Mr. Duff; and it will be a happy day, if you can give her some sense. Sir," he added, stopping his horse, and lowering his voice to a whisper, "be very plain with her, and stout; for I may as well tell you, that when she is fairly beside herself, she is too apt to speak words that may come against her soul in another world. Good night to you, kindly, Sir, and my blessing be with you."

CHAPTER II.

When Connel St. Leger and his companion were relieved from the importunities of Ileen, by the unwelcome approach of her master, they proceeded without further interruption to the place of rendezvous appointed by Mulvaney. It was an upper room in the house of a publican, in Derrynaslieve, where, if common report could be trusted, all the mischief in the country was hatched. Mulvaney, an elderly man with a good-humoured countenance, was seated at a table near the fire, with writing materials before him; supported on either side by two men, apparently of his own rank in life, which was that of a respectable, middling farmer. Five or six peasants, the majority very young men, belonging to the class of labourers, occupied seats at the lower end of the table; while close into the chimney-corner was squatted Murtagh Cummusky, smoking a pipe, his eyes closed, and his body bending forward, so that his crossed arms rested firmly on his knees.

"Always late, Connel St. Leger," said Mulvany, on the entrance of the young men—"and that's not what could be said of one of your family before, when any work for the good of the people was in hand. Your poor uncle Tom, who died like a hero thirty years ago, and more, was clock-work itself at a meeting; and he did more nor any other ten men put together for the country."

"If any body's to blame," replied St. Leger, carelessly, "it's ould Alice, your spy, who brought me word that the committee wouldn't sit till it was upon the stroke of five; and any body that ever knew there was a sun in the sky, may see it isn't long past four, this blessed minute."

"And you, Wat," continued Mulvaney, without noticing Connel's unceremonious justification of his punctuality, "you ought to show yourself a boy of spirit, if every other was to lag behind. The Delahunts were another sort of people long ago, from what they are now. The broad fields of Carragh made a handsome show, when *their* sheep and cattle grazed on them, before the Oglandbys and Thorndales built park-walls, and planted trees round them, to hinder the rightful owners from having even the poor pleasure of looking at them. Why, Wat, one would think you'd jump over the moon, for a chance of getting the inheritance of your forefathers back again."

"I'm ready and willing to do the committee's orders," said Delahunt, sturdily. "If I wasn't I wouldn't be here this evening. But it never was for the lucre of gain that I signed my hand to the paper. I came into the plan, first, from love to my comrade here, and I'll stick to it, for the honor of my religion, without expecting favor or affection more nor another."

"Well, boys," said Mulvaney, "I'm glad to see the stuff you're made of. A hundred the like of you, would soon clear Ireland of them that won't leave the poor even what the cold earth itself gives them, barring the day-light and the spring water; and, to my knowledge, both one and other of them is paid for

in Dublin. And how short a time, may I ax you, will the mail coach be bringing down that order to us, when Lord Colverston, and Sir Ralph Thorndale, and Jack Oglandby, and other Orange magistrates and Brunswickers, will write to tell the Castle, that we are nothing but cattle, with horns and hoofs? Aye, boys, that's hanging over us, and worse to follow, if we don't stir ourselves. So now for business.—You see, boys, none of the gentlemen of the committee could meet here this evening, but myself and Mr. Taaffe, and Mr. Flaghoolagh; but here is their names to the paper, with all drawn out reglar, that is demanded from you, according to your oath. Now listen, while I call over your names—Tim Fahy, Connel St. Leger, Wat Delahunt, Val. Tigue—it's put on you four to shoot old Jack Oglandby in his coach, next Wednesday evening, at the grove between the bridge and Carragh."

"With all the joy of my heart," said Connel, "or any body else that's marked. But how are we to get at him? Are we to send him a civil message to drive out, and be shot dasently, without more trouble? For who ever saw him out after night-fall this many a long day?"

"Leave you jeering, Connel. Better heads than yours have settled all that. There's to be a grand dinner at Charlesborough next Wednesday. The whole country will be there to meet the English Lord, who is come to look after his estates. Jack Oglandby will be there among the rest, to fill the stranger's mind with stories against his poor tenants: so, as the thing was settled long ago, the committee thinks it would be a good time to get him out of the way

when he is coming back that lonesome road. Then it will be a good lesson to the Englishman, if he has thoughts of grinding us like the rest of them."

"It's more the business of the Carragh boys, nor ours," said Fahy. "Why should it be put on us, when they will be the gainers in the end?"

"The Carragh boys wouldn't be backward if they were called to it," said Cummusky, from the chimney-corner; "and a good reason the committee had for not putting it on them, because they would be the first suspected, having a right to hate the ground he walks on. It isn't becoming to reflect upon them that can't answer; but this I'll say for them, that knows their mind, they don't want to save themselves trouble, and when you have a job to do at your own door, the boys from Carragh will be at your whistle."

"We'll do our own business, and theirs too," said Connel; "and we'll never whistle for them, if it isn't to dance to our music. Tim was only jealous that they'd get the credit of it all to themselves. Wasn't that it, Tim? But, Mr. Mulveney, wont I have the big blunderbuss? There is no man has a better right to it nor myself, having primed and loaded it before, and done a trifle of work with it, or I'm mistaken?"

"Never a man but yourself shall draw the trigger, Connel, while you have a finger on your hand; and Tim shall have the fellow of it, to put him in good humour. Wat has a gun of his own, and Val. Tigue shall be accoutered like a gentleman with the piece was taken from the young chap at Clough."

"But are you sure of the day, or that the old fellow will be in it at all?" inquired St. Leger.

"Ah! folly, man!" cried the tinker. "What need to be axing questions? Sure it was myself gave the notice; and if you want marks and tokens, here they are for you—I was told it by Will Travers, his own coachman, and I soldered one of the lamps where the top was crazy."

"There's no doubt about it," said Mulvaney: "so, boys, be prepared. Myself, and maybe one or two others, will meet you at the dance at Briny Killion's, on Tuesday evening, where we can settle the business out and out. Don't fail, every one of you four, to be in it, and remember your oaths about drink."

"It can't be done a-Wednesday," said Delahunt, who had been for some time evidencing symptoms of disapprobation, though unperceived by his associates. "There is an entire unpossibility, I tell you, to do it then, and it must be dropped for this turn."

"What's come over you, all on a suddent?" exclaimed St. Leger, rather angrily.

"Nothing strange," replied his friend. "I only know he will have company with him in the coach; and one wouldn't treat the innocent all as one as the guilty."

"Ah! what a bother you make about nothing. To want and hinder fair play, when we have the ball at our foot! What matter what company he has? They must take share of his supper, if they eat their dinner off the same plate, and sorrah mend them."

"If you was to jibe till you're tired, Connel, it would make no differ. Mr. Mulvaney—gentlemen—

all of you—just hear me out. I was yesterday at Rathedmond, and the whole talk of the kitchen was of the great doings at Charlesborough; and how the parson passed his apology because the mistress was weakly; and Mrs. Falconer would not go, say what they would. But Lady Thorndale would not be denied about Miss Dora; and all the servants was happy, when it was settled that old Mr. Oglandby would take her there in his coach, and bring her back safe to her father and mother, who can't bear to have her a minute out of their sight. Now, I put it to your breasts, if it would be right or becoming to destroy the like of her, only for having the luck of sitting beside her old grand-uncle?"

"There's sense and reason in that," said Val. Tigue. "Whatever we are, we are not savages; and none other would raise a hand to injure her."

This sentiment was quickly re-echoed by all the assembly, with the exception of Mulvaney and Murtagh Cummusky, who, from his smoky seat, muttered an imprecation against cowards and informers, and laid down his pipe, to watch the event of this interruption.

"I believe, gentlemen," said Mulvaney, addressing the committee men, "that we have no business to be listening to fellows laying down the law to us, when all they have to do is to go straight forward, wherever we order them. If every gossoon that is frightened at the smell of powder, is to contradict men of courage and understanding, and men who are endangering their own lives for the good of the poor, we may as well give over at once, and let them be all sold for slaves—them, and their innocent children.

But that shan't be. If we have a traitor among us, let him die the death of a traitor. He shan't escape, if he was my own brother—mind that. And I warn you all, boys, if you flinch when your service is wanted, as it is now, you'll be made such examples, that people will stop their ears through dread of hearing your doom."

"There's no traitors or informers here, Mr. Mulvaney," said Connel. "If Wat spoke in a hurry, it's what many a better man done before him; and I'll promise for him, he'll stand his ground like a man, when his mark is before him Wednesday night. Look up, Wat, and show yourself true to your friend and your oath."

"Oh! Mr. Mulvaney—oh! boys!" shouted the poor fellow, in a tone of agony, "it would be a downright murder to shoot the young lady, and"——

"Will no one put a gag in his mouth?" cried Mulvaney, "before the police comes in upon us. Boys, what are you made of, that you didn't put his head under the grate, at the very first word of wickedness that came out of his lips? What's come over you to listen to his preaching? What is it to any of you, if mischief was to happen to a young girl, when the first blow is struck for the glory of God, and the good of Ireland? And if the ball that rids the world of a tyrant, finishes her at the same time, what great harm is done? An't it what she deserves? Doesn't the blood of the hanging, scourging, torturing, flaying Oglandbys, flow thick in her veins? Hadn't she one to her grandfather, who hunted Christians with bloodhounds in the time of the rebellion? *Your* uncle, Connel St. Leger, was one of them, and his blood calls

for revenge from you. Isn't she daughter to him who draws his living from the hard earnings of the poor, and would tear the only fould of a blanket from the desolate orphan, sooner nor lose one halfpenny of his tithe? And is it that such as she may dress in silks and satins, and ride in a coach, that you will be willing to be robbed and peeled, till you and your families will think it a mercy to be let lie down at the back of a ditch, and die of hunger, and cold, and nakedness?"

"There's sense and reason, I believe, in that," said Murtagh; "and where's the spalpeen will dar to contradict it?"

"Murtagh Cummusky," said Connel, "you may fault your budget, and welcome; but it don't become you to put names on them that is your betters. And Mr. Mulvaney, with all submission to you and the other gentlemen, there's no need to talk to us, as if we were stocks and stones. There's not a man here that isn't steady, though for a minute he might be started at the thought of killing a woman in cold blood: but they all see it can't be helped; and a trifle won't stand in their way, when it comes to the push. Wat," laying his hand on his shoulders, "I answered for you before, and you didn't disparage my commendation—I pass my word for you now, once more; so, think of yourself, and of your character, and of your oath, not counting the love there is between us both."

"Mr. Mulvaney," said Wat, shaking off his friend roughly, "order me to go shoot him in his own parlour, in the broad day light, and I'll do it—and I'll die for it—and they may cut me in pieces, before I'll

betray a hair of one of your heads; but I couldn't harm her: why, the very stones would cry out murder after me, as I walked along the road; for didn't she save my own life, and, more nor all, my mother's life, when the fever frightened all but herself and her father from the door? I won't have a hand in her death—I won't, I say—no, I won't, and that's enough!"

"Since he is so positive," said Cummusky, coming forward, "it's best not to waste time advising him. Let me take his place. I have a steady hand, and a quick eye, without bragging of a loyal and stout heart. All I say, Mr. Mulvaney, is this, that you and the other gentlemen on the committee, would do well to know your men before you put the lives of half the country in their keeping."

"Keep to your trade, Murtagh, I tell you," said St. Leger, struggling against the passion which crimsoned his face, and caused his broad chest to heave quick and high, though he still spoke with some degree of calmness. "If the lads of this country don't please you, go back to Munster, where you came from, and we'll never break our hearts for the loss. Wat," again putting his hand on his shoulder, and looking him sternly in the face, "you hear what flings are cast in your teeth, and what we all come under from your nonsensicalness. Will I listen to it, do you think? Will I be said to have a coward, and an informer, for my comrade? Will I lie down with the curse of my country upon my head, for trusting a false-hearted and a faint-hearted traitor? You are careful about the life of one, who would think it a compliment to let you clean her shoes; and have you

no feeling for me, who would choke my brother for your sake? Now choose between me and her, for out of this room you will never stir till you have my life, or I have yours, if you don't abide by the orders of the committee."

"Spake like what is becoming in your breed," cried Mulvaney, with a glow of enthusiasm. "And you, Wat, is all the blood of the Delahunts lashed out of you by the cat-o'-nine-tails of the Oglandbys, that a drop of it wont mount to your cheeks, to raise a blush for your stupidity?"

In spite of this eloquent appeal to the blood of the Delahunts, not a particle of it would tinge the pallid countenance of the young man, as he stood perfectly still, with his eye fixed upon the ceiling. That he was inwardly agitated could only be guessed by a slight quiver of his lips, and the moisture which had gathered thick on his forehead; and no one felt inclined to break the silence which followed Mulvaney's harangue. He shaded his eyes for a moment with his hand, and then quietly placed it in the eager grasp of St. Leger.

"Connel, I will stand by you to the last," he said, in a determined voice. "I will do what I am commanded, only don't talk more to me now."

"This is as it should be," said Mulvaney, rubbing his hands: "and now, boys, let us have one glass apiece, and go home like sober men. Wat, I am right glad you are come to your senses, and my word for it, you'll never repent taking good advice."

"And, Wat," said Cummusky, winking at Mulvany, as he took the glass in his hand, "don't fret if you are a sweetheart out of pocket; only get the

lands of Carragh back again, boy, and you may pick and choose any lord's daughter in the land, if your fancy runs that way."

"You tinkering thief," cried Delahunt, in a rage, "if you don't stop your jibing at me, I'll brain you on the spot, no matter who gives you countenance."

"What are you about?" said Mulvaney, stepping between them. "Have you no enemies, but friends, to be fighting with? Have done, I say, or I'll settle you both. Take off your glasses quick, and go out one by one, separately, that there may be no eyes nor ears to have stories to tell another time. Remember Tuesday evening, at Briney Killions. Oh! boys, I was forgetting—any of you that wants to go to confession, it is better to be at Biddy Cahill's next Monday, where Mr. O'Floggin holds a station. Don't be troubling Mr. Duff, who is getting into years, and ought to have a little rest. The other is young and strong, and got his edication at Maynooth: so that he understands your meaning better. Don't be stopping in the town; and if any body finds out that you were speaking to me, you know you want to be employed on the new line, and that I was willing to oblige you all, after I go over the ground again. That's enough now, boys. Scatter, scatter."

CHAPTER III.

On the day appointed, Mr. Duff paid his promised visit to Mrs. Costigan, and exerted all his powers of rhetoric for the consolation of the poor woman, who was, as her husband described, a real object of pity, from the deep sorrow which could be traced in her countenance, even when she did not allude to the cause. He was received with the usual hearty welcome, for he was a general favourite with his flock, at least with the well-conducted portion of it; and he was a welcome visitor, at all times, to Mrs. Costigan, who, in former days, had a greedy ear for that species of petty gossip, which even the most uninteresting country neighbourhood can contrive to furnish, if all its details be husbanded carefully, and properly embellished; and which Mr. Duff, from his general acquaintance among Protestants and Roman Catholics, of all ranks and parties, had the best opportunities of hearing, with, at the same time, rather a propensity for retailing, especially when sifted by some of his female acquaintances, who were, in general, very anxious to know all about the internal economy of the great houses to which he was occasionally invited.

Though such topics had, of late, lost much of their interest with Mrs. Costigan, yet she was always glad to see him, for old acquaintance sake; and though his condolence consisted of a string of the veriest matter-

of-fact truisms, which at times irritated, rather than soothed her, still there was a thorough good-nature in his feelings, which threw a glow of kindliness over his most common-place expressions, and repressed any inclination to be angry. Then he could patiently listen to the often-repeated story of her grief, which, in circumstances like hers, is, perhaps, one of the kindest offices which a friend can perform.

His visits, therefore, had usually the effect of dissipating, for a time, her sadness, which her husband put to the account of his wise counsels, not suspecting that the bustle attendant upon his coming, had by far the greatest share in producing this amendment. In fact, having something to do, is an admirable anodyne for intense feeling. That the mind can be wholly engaged with one overwhelming idea, while the hands are busied with a variety of things, all to be put to different uses, or arranged in proper order, is not true in real, downright experience, though it may be indispensible to the complete keeping of the moral picturesque. Occupation, particularly that which includes locomotion, produces a succession of ideas in the mind most determined to keep fast hold of one to the exclusion of all others; and though the only effect, at first perceptible, may be a painful sensation of bewilderment and distraction, nevertheless the keen edge of the feelings is insensibly blunted, and the more constant the occupation, the sooner will the intensity of feeling subside. It is from this cause, that the feelings of the working classes, though violent in their first flow, appear to exhaust themselves at once. They have not the leisure to brood over their sensibilities. While the hands *must* be busy,

their heads cannot be quite uninterested; and where head and hands make common cause against the heart, its throbbings will be kept under.

In this way Mrs. Costigan was unwittingly cheated of a full half-hour of her monopolizing sorrow, while preparing the luncheon for her guest, and carving the cold goose, and worrying herself with trying to draw the cork of a bottle of Cape wine with a fork, and pressing him over and over again to eat and drink; and replenishing his plate and his glass, contrary to his earnest protestations of being unable to swallow another mouth-full. Between the intervals of eating, aud defending his plate from the inroad of provisions, which might have satisfied the appetite of three hungry men, Mr. Duff contrived to draw off her attention still farther from herself, by detailing pretty minutely the various reports of the doings at Charlesborough. The country, he said, was fairly at a loss to guess whether the young English lord who had just come over, would marry the eldest Miss Thorndale, or the Honourable Miss Traffield, Lord Colverston's daughter. Most people thought he was bound in honour to Sir Ralph, who had asked him to his house, and took so much trouble to please him—inviting the best quality from all parts to keep him company, and sending for fish every day to Dublin by the mail-coach. Nothing could be guessed of what Lord Farnmere himself thought, for he was very silent, and took no notice of any body, not even of Lady Thorndale, only sometimes asking the meaning of what was said, like a child who did not know his letters. The servants never stopped abusing him, for he gave them more trouble than all the other company put together,

changing his plate at every bit he put into his mouth, and, in the end, making his dinner off the very dish he at first found fault with. The butler, above all, was ashamed for the house, by his asking for sauces that nobody ever heard the name of, and spilling the fine Madeira into the water-glass beside him, as if it was trash from the ale-house. His silk dressing-gowns were also the astonishment of all who ever saw or heard of them; and his servant was the live-long day, brushing and shaking, and folding and unfolding, as if he had a barrack to provide with clothing. As to what his tenants had to expect, not even the agent could tell, for he gave no encouragement to him to say a word, but referred all to his law-agent in London. In short, he was so unaccountable, and so unlike any body else, that Mrs. Costigan became interested; and for another half-hour, not only listened, but asked questions, and made some lively comments, not much to the nobleman's advantage. Mr. Duff had succeeded beyond his expectations, and he was so delighted with the effects of his conversation, that, most unfortunately, as he was rising to take leave, he congratulated her upon recovering her spirits.

"Nothing," said he, shaking her affectionately by the hand, "could give me more pleasure than to see you cheerful, once again, as you used to be. It will enliven us all, and add some dozen of years to your own life. And now, like a sensible woman, give over your grief, and try and be glad that your little daughter is an angel in heaven."

Lord Farnmere, and his dressing gowns, and every thing pertaining to him, vanished instantly from her memory, and the one idea which had been justled out,

for a moment, from the place it occupied, again took possession of its strong hold in her imagination. The revulsion of feeling was so sudden, that it completely overpowered her, and she answered with more bitterness than she had ever given way to before, though often sorely tried by his attempts to comfort her:—

"Why should I be glad for that, Mr. Duff? It is no angel I want—it is my own child, just as she left me. What do I know about angels, only this, that if she is one, it is little she will think about her poor mother!—and if I were to meet her in heaven, and that she would look down on me, and would not run and throw her arms about my neck, and be all as one to me as ever, I would not stay one hour in it, if all the world was offered to me as a bribe."

"Oh! Mrs. Costigan! Them are fearful words for a Christian's mouth to speak. It is no such easy thing to get to heaven, that you should make light of it."

"It's useless to talk to me in that way, Mr. Duff. It is not heaven I am thinking about, or want to think about. How do I know if there is such a place at all? It is the one I lost that my heart is fixed in, and I won't be happy without her, if all the priests, and the Pope himself, were to preach till they were tired."

"I declare it's a terrible thing to listen to you, Mrs. Costigan—a sensible woman, and a well-read woman like you! If you would only think of yourself! Why, sure, you are not worse off than many; and what can I say to comfort you, if you won't

be satisfied, when I tell you that your child is an angel?"

"There is no comfort in it, Mr. Duff. It might satisfy you, who never had one to lose—but to talk to me!—to tell me to be content, because she is flying about with wings, in the sky, when I want to have her here, pressing her to my heart! You might as well tell the beggar that is perishing with cold, to bring heat to his bones by plunging in to the frozen pool without there."

She walked about the room, wringing her hands, and ejaculating in a manner, approaching to frantic; while Mr. Duff stood arguing with himself whether to rebuke her sharply for her impiety, or endeavour to calm her by speaking gently. The latter course was the most congenial to his disposition; but after puzzling for some time, he could only bring forward one of his good sayings, which he had often tried before, and as often failed of producing the desired effect.

"We ought all be resigned to the will of God, Mrs. Costigan, whatever that is."

"Well, I am resigned, because I can't help myself: and, after all, He has been better to me than you would be, though He has punished me; for He left what remained of her with me, so that I can tell the very spot where she lies, and I can go and cry over it when I choose; but you would bid me look for her, I don't know where; and even if I did find her, the chance is that I would not know her, from all I can learn from you."

"I am sorry you have so little respect for your

clergy, as to speak after such a manner," said Mr. Duff, quite dispirited, "I can only make bad worse by staying any longer; so I will go away, and I hope you will soon see your error, and be another woman entirely."

After the priest's departure, she was left alone for some time, her husband having gone to a distant farm, and Ileen so engaged in attending three or four sick calves, that she was scarcely a moment in the house during the day. She had, therefore, not only full time to indulge her grief to the utmost, but some also to spare for reflection on her conduct; which, after the excitement caused by his injudicious treatment had subsided, appeared to her in its true colours, of unkind and unjustifiable, and she now felt as angry with herself, as she had lately been with him.

Mrs. Costigan was altogether a very peculiar person—a compound of all that is estimable in fallen human nature, with a considerable alloy of every opposite quality—good and evil so jumbled together, that it was difficult to form an estimate of their comparative proportions. She had no ruling passion—none at least, that could boast paramount sovereignty; for they all ruled by turns, and ruled with a high hand, without suffering any interregnum. It is impossible to say, what she might have been with education, for her mind was certainly of a superior order. More than common good sense often appeared in her conversation, when the subject led to matters beyond the every-day occurrence of her confined sphere, or when she had an auditor who could enter into the spirit of her observations. She had read every thing

in the shape of a book that came in her way, from "the Seven Champions of Christendom," to "Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding;" and could repeat, by heart, page after page, from "Young's Night Thoughts;" besides passages from "Pope's Homer," "Hudibras," and "Shakespeare," to the undisguised admiration of her husband, and the secret annoyance of Father Duff, whose imagination never took a flight beyond the most downright prose. Her character for literary attainments was consequently high in the neighbourhood, and perhaps not much lower in her own estimation. But though her course of reading had, to a certain degree, improved her taste, it had not added to her stock of useful knowledge. On the contrary, it insensibly increased a natural leaning to scepticism, without undermining the strong holds of early superstition. Thus she gave implicit credit to any tale, however ridiculous, of supernatural appearances, particularly those narrating the moon-light gambols, or mischievous pranks of the "good people," and the prophetic lamentations of Banshees; though she would candidly confess, that she had never seen any thing worse than herself; while, on subjects of high and holy import, she, at times, expressed doubts, in the absence of sensible evidence. We do not pretend to account for this and many other incongruities in Mrs. Costigan's character; nor can we hope to describe her, so as to give a very determinate idea of it to our readers, unless to those among them, who are well acquainted with that particular modification of humanity, denominated a *real* Irishman, or Irishwoman. We shall therefore content ourselves, by simply stating, that she was a

genuine specimen of Irish human nature, which is, we believe, pretty generally allowed to be made up of a medley of contrarieties.

Her mind was tolerably composed, before Ileen could spare time from her calves, to look in upon her; and when she did so, it was to announce the approach of another visitor, who was seen that moment crossing the stubble field.

"Which I am right glad of," continued the good-natured girl, "for the sight of Miss Dora and her big dog would rise any body's heart, they are both so cheerful and agreeable."

Perhaps no other person would have been cordially welcome, at this time, to Mrs. Costigan; but Dora Milward was one of those fortunate beings, who seem to bring into the world with them a patent for popularity—a talent or a gift, or an acquisition, or whatever else it may be called, which there is no describing, and no accounting for. Many young persons, either by being well puffed, or by boldly putting forward pretensions of themselves, often cheat the crowd into an opinion of their superiority; but Dora, with the exception of nurse Burrowes, had no regular puffers, and, without any exception, no pretensions; yet the world, at least that part of it in which she moved, acknowledged, as if by general consent, her claim to superiority, and none more than Mrs. Costigan, who was in the habit of declaring, sometimes with very awful asseverations indeed, that from the moment she was born, nobody could ever see the shadow of a fault in her.

Her entrance had the usual effect of causing a con-

siderable stir in the household of Kiladarne. The fragments of the cold goose were quickly replaced by a large saucer of black currant jam, and a soup-tureen filled with honey-comb, besides bread, butter, apples, and various other eatables; all of which were heaped, one after the other, on Miss Milward's plate, and no excuse permitted for not partaking of them all. She managed to satisfy her hospitable entertainer pretty well, till attacked with a full glass of Cape Madeira, plentifully saturated with sugar, to make it more palatable, when the resistance became serious. Every refusal was met by the addition of another lump of sugar, till half the wine had overflowed; and her long walk, and the wetness of the day, and the damp of the stubble-field, were again and again brought forward, as arguments against her abstemiousness. Mrs. Costigan was at length obliged to resort to her last resource, of protesting that she would be offended unless obliged this once.

"Now only this once, Miss Dora, dear; I would'nt ask you to do any thing would injure you. You know that, and I am sure you want it, after your fatigue coming that tedious way through the fields, which is longer than any two miles of a good road."

"I am not in the least fatigued, Mrs. Costigan—you know it is but half a mile. Besides, my boots can resist any damp, and I would have great pleasure in obliging you, but, I assure you, my father would be seriously displeased if I were to drink wine of a morning."

"Oh! that settles it at once," said Mrs. Costigan, laying down the glass, and adding rather crossly,

"he would take it himself, though he hinders you; and that is what I don't understand, if he is so fond of you as he says."

Miss Milward did not think the present a good opportunity for defending her father, and immediately entered upon a subject which was always pleasing to Mrs. Costigan.

"I have a message from my mother, to say that she is quite jealous of you. She has been confined, partly to her bed, and entirely to her house, for upwards of three weeks, and every body has been to see her but you."

"She is not jealous of me, Miss Dora. She knows well, that if it would do her any good, there is nothing I would not do for her. But what use would my going answer, only to sink her spirits with my foolishness?"

She was verging fast towards a point which Dora was anxious to avoid, and she answered cheerfully—

"You must come—she will take no excuse: and then, it is a long time since you borrowed any books, and we have got some lately, which, I am sure, will interest you."

"If they are about religion, it is as well to tell you at once, Miss Dora, that I could find no pleasure in them. Religion does very well when one is happy, with nothing to give them uneasiness; but when a weight of sorrow is thrown upon one, like as it was upon me, I see no use in it."

"Dear Mrs. Costigan! surely you are not in earnest! I thought it was a truth universally acknowledged, that religion, at all times a comfort and a

blessing, was peculiarly so under misfortune of any kind."

"So *you* may think, who don't know what misfortune is, and long may you continue without that bitter knowledge! Why, Miss Dora, I was as religious as any body, when affliction was far off; and I remember feeling quite happy long ago, when I confessed what I had to confess, and that there was no more trouble about it till the next time. But what good was it to me, after all? And would not I be a fool to look to it for what I know it can't do? Can it hinder death from knocking at any door it pleases? Can it bring back life, when the breath flies out of the body?"

"I certainly cannot speak from my own experience," replied Dora, rather alarmed at the sarcastic bitterness with which she spoke; "but my mother, who has met with many severe trials, tells me that religion was a very great comfort at such times, and I must believe her."

"And so you ought, for you will never hear any thing but truth out of *her* mouth. But it is out of the question to talk of your mother and me in one breath—she, who was always better than any body else, and that could not be any thing but comfortable, under any cross, reflecting on her own goodness. Miss Dora, I have lived forty years in the world, and you, to my knowledge, have counted only nineteen, so it is but natural that I should have more experience than you; and remember I say to you, without fear of contradiction, that there never was her equal living, nor ever will be."

"She has not so high an opinion of herself," said Dora; "and indeed," aiming at an incredulous smile, "it is too exaggerated to be true of any individual."

"I have watched her these thirty years," continued Mrs. Costigan, "and I could only see one thing better than another in her. She has no more pride than an infant at the breast, though every body knows the family she is come of; and though her health is so poor, she never thinks of herself, but has a watchful eye for the distresses of others: and has not she the gentlest voice, and the mildest look? and would she offend the poorest worm that crawls on the earth? and didn't she rejoice with me in my good luck, as if the blessing was all her own? and didn't the tears roll down her cheeks when my sun went down under a cloud, never to rise again? and, after that, will any body tell me that she is to be put on a par with others?"

Dora's eyes sparkled with delight.

"It is all very true, Mrs. Costigan. I really do believe that there is nobody like my mother. But, I assure you, it is religion which has made the great difference between her and many amiable people, for there is nothing essentially good in man or woman. The Bible says so, and we must believe it, though no man should add his testimony to that truth. But, as you think my mother worthy of credit, I can tell you that she confesses it to be true, from the experience she has of her own sinfulness."

"I know that is the way Swaddlers talk, but your mother has too much sense to think it, though she may give in to it, now and then, not to contradict them. Religion never could make her what she is, if

her own goodness was not there to back it. Between ourselves, Miss Dora, I never thought much of religious people, looking at them only in that way. Leave out the talk, and what bit better are they than others? Sure, all the priests in the world are religious, and what are the most of them? and Alice O'Neil, the Carmelite, is religious, and she can rear up that natural, her grandson, to rob, and plunder; and John Bradley, the class-leader, has religion on his tongue, every word he speaks, and he leads his poor old mother-in-law the life of a dog; and Toby Weir, who dipped himself and his family, out of religion, never stops going to law with all his neighbours, for nothing—and your own father too, who has such a name"——

"My father!! Mrs. Costigan! It would be very difficult, I should think, to find any real inconsistency in my father."

"Well, after all, I have not much against him. But, Miss Dora, dear, he can fly into a passion at times; and sure religion ought to keep a man from that."

"You quite mistake my father—he never flies into a passion—he may, on some occasions, think it right to speak very decidedly, but that is quite different from the vulgar and unchristian habit of flying into a passion."

"I don't doubt it, dear; and though I said that to yourself, in my haste, I would not stand by and hear another find fault with him. No matter—if he was twice as good as he is, he never could come up to your mother; for I will stand to it still, that if ever

any body deserved to go to heaven, it is Mrs. Milward, and she will go to it."

"And so will my father, too," said Dora, rising, "though there is no doubt in either case. But he is just as good, and just as amiable, and you never saw so good a man in all your life, Mrs. Costigan, and I am sure you think so. I have another message from my mother, or rather a present," taking a little book from her reticule. "She begs you to accept this as a keepsake, and she hopes you will read it, and tell her how you like it: it is a New Testament; and she says that if Mr. Duff objects to it, she will get one of the Douay version, to which there can be no objection."

"My mind is my own, Miss Dora, and no man shall put fetters on it. Give her my compliments, and my thanks; and tell her I will read every word of it for her sake, if it was the worst book in print. But it won't do what she expects. She thinks it will comfort me, when the truth is, Miss Dora, I would rather not be comforted; I would rather keep my sorrow than part with it, for what have I else to fix my mind on?"

"She said nothing to me about comfort. She simply requests you to read it, and tell her your opinion of it. Good bye; and remember, my mother expects a visit from you soon. Come, Figaro. Don't you delight in my dog, Mrs. Costigan? I should feel quite safe in the wildest part of the country, with him for a guard."

"You would be safe any where," said Mrs. Costigan to herself, as she watched her bounding over the

stile into the adjoining field. "There is not the heart in all Ireland would contrive harm against you, if you travelled from one end of it to the other, by yourself."

CHAPTER IV.

We have often heard it remarked by travellers on the Continent, that there is a very striking difference to be perceived between the Protestant and Roman Catholic countries, as to the external appearance of the people and their habitations; and though the charge of bigotry and intolerance may be most sentimentally brought against us, we must contend, that a like difference, though in a less degree, can be observed between the professors of the two religions in Ireland. It may be imperceptible to the mere English eye, which is too much shocked by the general appearance of poverty and wretchedness, and dirt and slovenliness, to distinguish between the less and the more of these all-pervading abominations. But we put it to the candour of any impartial Irishman, whose powers of comparison have not been nullified by English recollections, and who has had opportunities of studying the character and habits of our peasantry, if the fact has not been repeatedly forced upon his conviction. We acknowledge there are exceptions on both sides. There are pig-sties inhabited by Protestants, and there are decent cottages in the possession of Roman Catholics; but they are, one and the other, exceptions.

At no time is the difference in personal appearance more apparent than on a Sunday morning, when the roads are filled with peasants going to their different

places of worship, all in their holiday garb, and all washed, and scrubbed, and combed, and as clean as their ideas of cleanliness go. Those on their way to the chapel, have in general the advantage of a more picturesque costume among the females. The gayest colours are in requisition, from the infirm grandmother, to the sprightly girl of eighteen; and, with the exception of bonnets, those in tolerable circumstances are equipped with all the covering required for decency and comfort. But a great majority of the young women are without shoes and stockings, with a gown, or petticoat, or apron, of some stay-at-home friend, thrown over their shoulders, which supplies the place of a shawl or handkerchief. The men are clothed in home manufacture—the knees of their breeches unbuttoned, and, whether the weather be hot or cold, the large trustee, a loose, long, frieze great coat, is indispensable to the full dress of a man advanced in years.

The Protestants, whatever their taste may be as to dress, have altogether a more respectable appearance. An air of comparative decency pervades the whole. Every button is required to do its legitimate duty; every leg and foot have their appropriate covering; and, except in the case of a very few old women, no head is unbonnetted. In fact, those who are unprovided with the necessary habiliments, stay at home, and firmly resist the exhortations of their minister to attend public worship, until, as they express it, they are *in a way of going*. All, however, Protestant and Roman Catholics, have the same air of cheerfulness and hilarity; and kind greetings, and mutual inquiries after each other's welfare, pass between neigh-

bours, unless where some feud exists, or in the case of an unfortunate convert, who, no matter what his character or conduct may be, is an object of scorn, and hatred, and persecution.

On the Sunday immediately following the commencement of this story, a more than usual number of persons passed the gate of Rathedmond, on their way to the church and chapel. The concourse to the latter place was easily accounted for, as some religious procession was expected to take place after mass; and Mr. Milward felt no small degree of self-complacency, as he pointed out to his daughter, during their walk to church, two or three of his flock, who were notorious defaulters, except at Christmas or Easter, and whose appearance, on the present occasion, he believed to be the effect of his last lecture to the offenders.

"I spoke very strongly, indeed, the other day, to Katty Richardson," said he; "and though I must confess she was rather surly at the time, yet you see, Dora, that my lecture was not thrown away."

We know not whether the rector ever received the information, which we had from a neighbour of undoubted veracity, who had it from Katty's own lips, that nothing but curiosity to see the English lord, who was expected to visit Rathedmond church that day, would have brought her out, if all the parsons in the country were talking for a year together.

However, much to the disappointment of Mrs. Richardson, and of others, who had the discretion to keep their minds to themselves, Lord Farnmere did not make his appearance at church; and when the congregation separated, the mere gossiping part of

it had nothing new to talk about, but a few surmises as to the cause of his absence.

After service, Miss Milward hastened to the Sunday School, where she was on hard duty, having to teach her mother's class in addition to her own, besides the troublesome task of keeping order—no easy matter at all times, as many of the scholars took the liberty of being now and then impertinent to those teachers who were not in the rank of ladies and gentlemen; and the teachers, not unfrequently, lost even the species of respect, which was legitimately their due, by entering into angry arguments, and vindicating their own dignity, in a manner not always the most dignified.

We must be allowed here to remark, though it may break in upon the thread of our narrative, that Sunday Schools, at least on any thing of a large scale, are difficult to manage, or indeed to establish at all, on a permanent footing, unless the requisite number of teachers can be supplied out of the immediate family of the person promoting them. On the first proposal of such an undertaking, particularly if recommended by an individual of consequence in the neighbourhood, it meets with the unqualified approbation of old and young. Names are put down, and rules drawn up, and promises of punctuality as cheerfully given, and the classes divided, and sub-divided, to accommodate the superfluity of ready made educators, who offer their *unpretending* services; and for three or four Sundays all goes on prosperously. But the number of teachers gradually diminishes. Some drop off without assigning any cause, except that they cannot, or will not attend; while others have more

substantial reasons, either declared or suspected, for their secession. Thus, the curate marries, and the educational zeal of one or two families is suddenly damped. The rector's lady has not bowed sufficiently gracious to a fair aspirant after gentility, who will not again put herself in the way of being looked down upon; and the rector himself gives unconscious offence to another, by buying his whip-cord from the fellow next door, who cannot sign his name. The very significant manipulations practised by the majority of the pupils put to flight another; and, in all probability, the most subdued looking, and humility-professing of all, takes huff at discovering that his inferior in rank has been complimented with a class of readers, while he has been fobbed off with a set of spellers: and thus the secession goes on, till the care of the whole establishment is thrown upon the very few, who are to be found in any place, willing to sacrifice their tastes or antipathies, or to overlook either real or ideal slights, or to bear with a few annoyances, when a positive duty cannot be fulfilled without some sacrifice.

Mrs. Milward had experienced all those difficulties, over and over again, with her School; for, unluckily, the parishioners of Rathedmond had their periodical fits of goodness; and, at such seasons, would volunteer their services, and undertake with great spirit what they had repeatedly failed in. When Lady Thorndale interested herself in such matters, the general feeling was all on the right side; but when her ladyship was occupied with other pursuits, which was not seldom the case, the excitation subsided into the usual apathy. At the time of which we are

speaking, Sunday Schools were not the fashion with the less-than-three-quarters-gentry of Rathedmond; and though the attendance of children was pretty numerous, the teachers were reduced to four, viz.—Miss Milward; an old pensioner, by name Johnny Monroe; and a young lad and his sister, who had hitherto been unwearied in their duty, though, at times sadly tired by some of their rude pupils, who, when inclined to be idle, would tell them that they only permitted them to teach them, out of compliment to the mistress and Miss Dora.

But on this day every thing appeared to be going on smoothly, and for a long time the most perfect harmony and good conduct pervaded the whole establishment, till, towards the conclusion, symptoms of misrule began to show themselves among the boys in Monroe's class, which he was exerting all his influence to restrain. Miss Milward *would not* hear or see for some time, hoping that the ferment might subside without her interference; but it went on gradually increasing, till one or two elbows were hard at work in their neighbours' sides, and angry words were muttered, and angry looks exchanged between the young combatants. She could no longer pretend ignorance of this unseemly conduct.

"Mr. Monroe, I am afraid that some of your boys are very inattentive. Will you have the goodness to keep them quiet, for they are disturbing the whole School."

Before Monroe could reply, two or three of the youngsters called out in unison, "Miss Dora, Miss, it's Lanty M'Grail, who won't let us alone; and he's putting up Mark Dawson, and Willy Swayne, to be

thumping and pegging us, and we doing nothing, Miss."

"Lanty, you have no business at that form," said Dora, turning to the culprit. "Go to your own seat, and employ yourself properly, with your lessons, which I shall call you up to repeat in a few minutes."

This was addressed to a red-haired, long-armed, raw-boned, yet lumpish-made boy, apparently from twelve to fourteen years of age, with a face, where all the features seemed to take the usual situations, more by chance than design; and such a total want of expression in his light grey eyes, or wide-gaping mouth, that his countenance presented as few marks of intelligence, as that of a great calf quietly chewing the cud.

Totally unmoved, either by the complaint or reproof, he kept his place, balancing himself upon one leg, and thumbing over the dirty remains of a spelling book, as he cast a side glance alternately at the lady and the complainants on the form.

Dora, who knew from experience the self-willed nature of her pupil, did not wait till her orders were obeyed, but turned away, and again busied herself with her class. The cessation of hostilities between the contending parties was, however, of very short continuance. In a few minutes, another complaint was loudly vociferated.

"Miss Dora, will you speak to Lanty, Miss, if you please. There's no end to him, so there isn't. He never stops battering and pushing me, and is saying plenty of bad words under his breath."

"Lanty," said the young lady, again advancing, "I shall be very angry, indeed, if you do not sit down at once in your own place."

"Can't Tommy Taggs, then, give me my marvels, he tuck from me?" growled Lanty, without stirring an inch from the place where he was standing.

"Ah! never mind him, Miss," cried Tommy. "I had no hand in them at all. It was last Tuesday he lost them out of his pocket on the road, and Willy Swayne told him, out of a joke, that I found them. So, when a thing comes into his head, there is no getting it out, for he hasn't sense to see the differ."

A general titter followed this observation; and Lanty, who the moment before, seemed inclined to retire to his own seat, now moved still nearer the forbidden ground.

"I want my marvels," he repeated, "and I won't stir a step till I get them."

Dora's patience unluckily failed, and she addressed him in the pettish tone of reproach and altercation, which invariably lessens authority, and approximates the teacher to a level with the unruly pupil.

"I am very glad that your marbles are lost, you provoking boy; and if you do not at once go to your place, I shall"——

She was at a loss to finish the sentence, not being prepared to say what she should, could, or ought to do; and while hesitating for a proper ending to her speech, the boys, encouraged by her warmth, began, some to laugh, and others to order him, in a very dictatorial way.

The very opposite effect to that which it was intended to produce, was the consequence of this com-

bined attack; for down squatted Lanty, immediately between two of his most vociferous accusers, and wriggled, and squeezed, and elbowed, till he had more than room for himself on the form, totally regardless of the expostulations of Monroe, who was pushed from his seat by the pressure of the boys beside him.

Miss Milward saw that she had overstepped her bounds. She knew that nothing but main force would make him quit his post, a measure to which she felt no inclination to resort; and while he remained in his present situation, no attention could be expected from the boys. To make a dignified retreat, if possible, was therefore her only resource.

"Mr. Monroe," said she, "I am very sorry that you have been treated so disrespectfully by one of my pupils; but we shall provide against a recurrence of such conduct in future. Perhaps it will be advisable to dismiss your class for this day, as I fear there is a strong inclination in all parties to be quarrelsome."

Monroe followed her advice, and when the boys had been dismissed, she again spoke to Lanty, who sat rocking himself on the form, and indenting it with his thumb-nail.

"You may go away when you please, as I shall not teach you to-day. I hope your conduct may be very different next Sunday, that I shall not be obliged again to delay giving you a very nice leather cap—much nicer than Harry Dunn's, which I bought for you, and intended giving to you this day, after school."

"And what's to hinder you giving it to me now, Miss Dora?"

"Your very disrespectful conduct to Mr. Monroe, and to myself, for this last half-hour. You must behave very differently indeed, next Sunday, or I will not give it to you even then."

"Tell them to give me my marvels, Miss Dora, and that's all I want," reiterated her pupil, in that dogged voice, which is the most hopeless of all voices.

"Lanty, dear!" said Monroe, in a whisper, "can't you go away, and not be after displeasing your best friend, for nothing but your own peevishness?"

Lanty took no notice of this kind expostulation, further than by a shove with his elbow; and still scratched the seat, at times looking sideways at Miss Milward, who had resumed the instruction of her class. After a short interval of quiet he again called out—

"Will you give me the cap you promised me, Miss Dora?"

"Certainly not. Next Sunday you shall have it, if you deserve it, which I am afraid you are not intending to do, by your continued obstinacy."

"Will you tell them to give me my marvels, then, if you won't give me my cap?" persisted Lanty, apparently determined not to give up. But Dora, wisely declining any further altercation, and pretending to be too busy either to see or hear him, after a few efforts of making a noise, by knocking the seats against each other, and growling in an under voice, he gradually drew nearer and nearer to the door; and when he thought nobody was looking at him, he made a sudden bolt and disappeared.

"I am afraid, Miss Dora," said Munroe, when the

School had broken up, "that you will make no hand of that boy. It is only giving yourself trouble, to no end, to try and do any thing for him. As he grows older he is only the more stubborn, and the little sense he had is fast turning into wickedness."

"Oh! Mr. Munroe," cried Dora, earnestly, "do not despair of poor Lanty. You have hitherto encouraged me to persist in teaching him, when every body else laughs at me; and even my mother sometimes shakes her head incredulously at my hopes about him. Consider how very, very little sense he has; and then consider that it is our duty to bear with him if he runs riot at times. Have I not often heard you say, that we should act towards our fellow creatures as God does towards us, who bears hourly with our wilfulness? And why should poor Lanty be excepted from our forbearance, when his want of understanding calls upon us to exercise it more than we are naturally inclined?"

"You have put it on the right footing, Miss Dora, and it was what I would agree to myself, if I wasn't overtaken by a bit of pride. I was vexed that he did not give heed to me checking him; and I was sore about the unmannerly way I was jostled off the seat, and when my pride rose high, I thought there was no hope for him, because I hadn't all the respect I thought my due. Go on, and God's blessing will be over you, one way or other, in what you are doing for him. But don't think I am encouraging a bad spirit, when I tell you that I have my doubts of his ever being a scholar. I believe, Miss, he is terrible bad at the book?"

"Not at all, I assure you. He improves amazing-

ly. You know that he has not been coming to School much upwards of two years, and yet he can spell words of three letters remarkably well, indeed as well as I can myself. You must listen to him next Sunday repeating his lesson, and you will be surprised and delighted."

"You have done wonders, Miss Dora," cried Monroe in the simplicity of his heart. "There's few, I well judge, could do so much; and as that seems to be your gift, why shouldn't you use it? And, indeed, after what you tell me, I make no doubt but you'll have him a fine scholar yet. But there is one thing, Miss Dora, above all that, and I would be glad to hear it from your own lips, if you think the innocent has any thoughts for his poor soul—if he has sense and feeling ever to raise his mind to think of God. Ah! Miss, without that, you know well, it's little matter what knowledge he gets. He could meet the Lord in glory, without knowing a letter in a book; and he might read like Aristotle, and come short of the kingdom of God after all."

"We must hope the best on that point too, Mr. Monroe. It is almost impossible to form an opinion as yet, of how much, or how little, he is capable of comprehending. I have seen, at times, something in his countenance, like an effort to think, when I have been speaking to him of any passage in the Scriptures, which alludes to the love of God, in sending his Son into the world to die for sinners; and I really do think, that *I once* saw him look up with an expression of gratitude. But do not mention this to my aunt Falconer; and do not tell her that I can perceive a gradual improvement in him, as to some-

times telling truth. You may trust me, Mr. Monroe, when I assure you, that lies do not appear to come half so naturally to him, as formerly; and I know he respects truth in others. It may be as well," she continued, as they were leaving the house, "if we do not speak of his rude behaviour to any body, particularly to my aunt, who—she might—that is—oh! you know my aunt Falconer, Mr. Monroe."

"She is a christianable woman, I think," he answered, after a short pause; "but she has her own ways, like Lanty. Tut—what am I saying? The dear gentlewoman isn't a bit like Lanty; only she has her own ways, like—like—like us all. I believe that is the safest thing to say. Well, Miss Dora, we will take different roads now. His blessing be over you at home or abroad: if it's His will that you should be the means of bringing knowledge to the heart of that poor, half-witted creature, why it is His own doing, and sure nothing is impossible with Him. I believe," he added, talking to himself, after he parted from the young lady, "that He fits some for any part of his work, no matter how seemingly out of their way it is; and you are one of them, it is likely, can do any thing you put your hands to. Well, I trust he will keep you humble, and not let people be flattering you to your face, and telling you it would be hard to find the fellow of you, if one was to travel further than I can say."

CHAPTER V.

Tuesday evening came, and the dance at Briny Killion's was merrily kept up to a late hour. Murtagh Cummusky, who to his other accomplishments added that of a musician, relieved the blind fiddler occasionally, so that there was no pause between the dances, much to the satisfaction of Ileen Garvey and one or two other light-footed damsels, who were notorious for tiring out three or four partners before they sat down. The gaiety pervading the whole party was so natural and so incessant, that no one, judging from appearances, could suppose that the numerous assemblage was collected for any other purpose than that of thoughtless merriment. Even Alice O'Neil's cross countenance relaxed into something not very unlike good humour; and Wat Delahunt, who was rather of a grave temperament, replied to the tinker's jokes with a spirit which drew repeated bursts of laughter from the auditors. Yet there were not, perhaps, six individuals in the house who were not perfectly aware that some deed of violence was to be determined that evening; and the principal actors were often alluded to in a mysterious way, as the boys who had warm work on their hands.

Ileen was not totally free from uneasiness, though her laugh was the loudest, and her repartees dealt out unsparingly on all sides. Like others not fully initiated, she guessed that Connel St. Leger was en-

gaged in one of those outrages, unhappily but too common in the country; but what the nature of the next exploit was to be, she was yet in ignorance, though she attacked him several times in the course of the evening, and threatened various marks of her displeasure, if he was so dark with her, who would tell him any thing. Connel easily found means to divert her attention (at all times easily diverted) to some passing occurrence; till being alarmed by Alice O'Neil, who, in the gaiety of her heart, gave the toast of "dark nights and bloody blankets," at the same time winking significantly at him, she kept so close to the point, that he was obliged to pretend anger, and was trying to look sulky, when he was agreeably relieved by the entrance of Mulvaney, who accounted to Mrs. Killion for his appearance, by telling her of the accident which happened to his stirrup-leather, while riding from his stepson's, where he had dined.

"It was well I wasn't hurt," he continued, "for I was trotting fast when it gave way; and I will be for ever obliged to you for the loan of a candle to look for my stirrup, which I left after me, a perch or two from the house. Ah! boys, will some of you come along with me, and help me to find it."

This, though not apparently addressed to any one in particular, seemed perfectly understood by all present to mean a select few, for though there was much bustle, and many offers of assistance, yet none followed him from the door but St. Leger and his three associates in crime. The stirrup was quickly found, and they all adjourned to the stable to repair the fracture of the leather.

"Buckle it on at once, Val," said Mulvaney, closing the door. "I slipped it out myself, to have an excuse for dropping in upon you, for one ought to be cautious these days of raising suspicions; and it wouldn't be becoming in a man of my years and standing, to be roistering with a parcel of youngsters in a place like Briny's. Now, to business, boys. Are you all ready to do Jack Oglandby's job to-morrow night?"

"All entirely," was the unanimous reply.

"And are you all staunch and true?" looking sternly at Delahunt.

"If you mean me, Mr. Mulvaney," replied the young man, returning his look with interest, "you may save your breath axing questions. I gave you my word before, and if that don't please you, you'll get nothing more from me."

"We are all true blue, or true black, or true any thing you please," said St. Leger; "and that's enough of it. But you haven't told us when we are to expect our bird?"

"He is to leave Charlesborough at ten o'clock, and in half-an-hour he will be in reach of our bullets. You had better be in the grove an hour before the time, for fear of mistakes. I have to give no more advice, but my blessing, and remember to keep your own secret—that's all."

"Never fear—we'll not tell of ourselves," answered Val. Tigue. "I hope others will be as cautious; for there isn't a dog in the parish but could tell, if he liked it."

"And who will tell? or who dar tell? or who ever

did tell of any of our doings? Answer me that, Val."

"Oh! I am not going to cry treason for nothing—never fear. But I won't be faced down in it, that there was no use to let them of the Carragh know all about it. They are poor, and if a big reward was offered, who knows how they might be tempted to hang us all?"

"Val. I'm ashamed of you. I'll go bail for the Carragh. You see boys, I know what I am about, or do you think I would put my own life in danger, as well as yours? They will offer a large reward—that's only natural; but they would be sorry to have it to pay. Lord Colverston will call a meeting, and he and his dependants will make speeches, and draw up resolutions, and write to the castle for the insurrection act. Well now, all that is in our favour; for what will the Braymores and that faction be doing? Won't they have another meeting, and won't they say the country is as quiet as a lamb, and that old Oglandby is one in a hundred, and might be shot any where, he is such a tyrant; and the matter will drop quietly, for all sides is afraid of us, and they see they can't stop us."

"We'll have a sore life with the women, any how," said Tigue, "if damage is done to Miss Dora. There never was one in the country has such a name with rich and poor, and I'm not afraid or ashamed to speak it out before yees all, that if it wasn't for my oath and the honour of God, I'd burn off my hand before I'd lift it again a hair of her head."

"So would we all," said Mulvaney, "for she is a fine sprightly creature, and does mighty little harm,

considering the wish she has to lead the children astray; but if she was your own sister, you can't go off now. Go back to the house cheerful, and take your diversion. To-morrow night you will have sport of another kind;—I wish the time was come, for I am longing that it was done, and well done."

Now, though it is in our power to indulge any of our readers, who may feel the same longing with Mr. Terence Mulvaney, by annihilating the intermediate space between the conspiracy at Briny Killion's, and half-past ten on the following night, yet it would break in so much upon our plan, that we must conduct them, however unwilling, through the morning, noon, and evening of the eventful Wednesday, leaving the catastrophe to be brought about in the regular course of things. Besides, we should lose the opportunity of introducing a new character under the most favourable circumstances, and such as are not likely to occur again, during the very limited period, through which this story will extend. This is Mrs. Burrowes, the person of most consequence, in her own opinion, and that of many others, in the house of Rathedmond. She had nursed Mrs. Milward, and had gone home with her, on her marriage, as a kind of nondescript, between lady's maid or any other denomination of upper servant, according as her services were required. For the first few years she presided over the nursery, and participated keenly in the grief of the parents, as each little one followed its brother and sister to the grave, till every olive branch had disappeared from round their table, except one girl, who consequently became, what every *one* child always is, a wonder, and a beauty, and very nearly

an idol. As Dora grew up, and the nursery establishment was done away, Mrs. Burrowes, though always addressed as "nurse," by the heads of the family, was regularly installed as house-keeper, and, in virtue of that office, ruled with an authority, which was exerted not only over the subordinate members of the household, but sometimes extended even to her master and mistress. Such little occasional stretches of power were, however, submitted to, or overlooked, except where they interfered with the management of the young lady, whose breeding did not altogether accord with her notions of perfect gentility. Gentility was her failing. She valued every man or woman according to their family descent. To be of an ancient family, was a sufficient passport to her good opinion at once. To be an upstart, was a fault for which there could scarcely be found a redeeming virtue. The Oglandbys she considered as the first family in the known world, and every, the most distant connection of that favoured race, she regarded with peculiar veneration. When Miss Oglandby *would* marry Mr. Milward, who, there was no denying it, could hardly count a grandfather, and *that* grandfather not worth counting, she made the best of it; and, for the first time in her life, was heard to acknowledge that some were born gentlemen, no matter who their forefathers were; and that, after all, a good man was a good man, and that maybe there was more luck and grace before a lady of family, in joining herself to one of that sort, than if she married the first lord in the land. Then Mr. Milward was a very handsome young man, and a sensible man, and a man of independent spirit, and, in many respects, more

gentleman-like in conduct than some of the high-born Oglandbys; and as her mistress was, perhaps, the happiest in the married state of all her family, Mrs. Burrowes both loved and respected him.

Still there were a few little peculiarities in the mode of living at Rathedmond, which, in her heart, she believed had their origin in her master's low extraction. We say, in her heart, for she was vehement in making excuses of an opposite nature, when these peculiarities were subject of conversation in the servants'-hall. At the time of Mr. Milward's marriage with Miss Oglandby, though the match was considered, by more than Mrs. Burrowes, to be a very so-so one for the lady, yet, in one respect, all agreed that they were very well suited to each other—he, being the pattern of a respectable clergyman; and she, a devout and honourable woman. But shortly after their marriage, a great change took place in their religious sentiments; so much so, that every body's curiosity was excited to know what they said, and did, and thought; and stranger things were believed of their saying, and doing, and thinking, than common credulity could excuse, unless we bear in mind, that in those days the profession of any thing like serious religion was a new thing in Ireland; and though it very nearly turned that part of the world upside-down, it differed nothing from what causes so little sensation now, but is quietly dismissed under the name of Methodism, or Calvinism, or the New Light, or any other such term, which means any thing, or nothing, in the minds of half the people who use them. A change of opinions naturally produced a change of conduct—not that there was any very outrageous innovation upon

the common forms and habits of civilized society. There certainly was a less expenditure in the article of dress, and the other mere luxuries of life; but still they were very respectably clothed, and made use of chairs, and tables, and sofas, and knives, and forks, and spoons, pretty much as the generality of people do. There was, however, a decided change of system, which Mrs. Burrowes did not understand, and could not approve of, though, to do her justice, she always endeavoured to like what pleased her mistress; and, as her own province was not invaded, she quietly submitted to the fancies, which she hoped would soon take flight. But they did not take flight; on the contrary, they seemed, year after year, to establish themselves more firmly; and it was only when they were brought to bear upon the education of the hopes of the family, that their annoyance was most sensibly felt.

Every *real* young lady, she averred, ought to wear monitors and steel collars, and be taught to dance, and be taken to the Castle when they were seventeen, or eighteen at the most, and afterwards go to balls, without stopping till they were married. Whereas, Miss Dora was left to nature, so that it was a miracle to look at her beautiful figure, that never was tightened or put into shape. And she was never taught to dance, and her ears were never bored, because, like a foolish child, she did not choose to be put to pain; and she never saw twenty real gentlemen and ladies together, full dressed, in all her life: and how was she ever to be married? These considerations pressed heavily upon her spirits; but the dawn of a new day seemed about to appear above

the horizon of Dora's hitherto clouded life, when Lady Thorndale and Mr. Oglandby succeeded in gaining her mother's consent to her dining at Charlesborough, on the grandest of their grand days; where she would meet people with blood in their veins; and where there might be a ball; and where she might be forced to stand up to make out a set; and where there was a young English lord, who,—there was no saying what might happen,—might make her an English lady. She had read in printed books of curates' daughters making fine matches, as if by accident, and what was to hinder a rector's daughter of the same luck? Those were the circumstances to which we alluded, as favourable to Mrs. Burrowes's first introduction to our readers; for her temper was unusually placid, and she felt in good humour with all the human race, even with Kitty Moore, the slammekin housemaid, to whom she chatted confidentially while finishing her breakfast.

"The Oglandbys, Kitty, were always allied to nobility, in every generation. The mistress's mother, Lady Dorothea Oglandby, was daughter to the Earl of Portmarnock, and her eldest brother was married to Lord Clondalkin's sister. The mistress herself might have been the Honourable Mrs. Falconer, if she liked; and when he could not get the one sister, he took the other. After all, she did as well—for he was not very young, nor very rich, and died soon after his marriage. The very first Lady Thorndale was Oglandby. That's the way they are related to the family. Before that they had not much to brag of—farmers and graziers—that sort entirely. Now they have a right to look up. And so, as I was saying,

Kitty, I am glad that Miss Dora is going to take her place among her equals, after being kept from them too long. Religion is a good thing—who says the contrary? But if it sinks a family, and keeps one for ever at home, without knowing what is going on in the world—I say nothing, only give me the good old times, when there was one religion for the quality, and another for them it was no matter about. I must go now, and settle all her things properly, for she is so heedless, that it might be a dab of a muslin she would put on, instead of the beautiful new gown she never wore yet, if I'm not at the beginning and end of every thing."

Mrs. Burrowes found ample employment from that moment, in rummaging drawers, burnishing necklaces and bracelets, and airing, and spreading out sundry articles of dress, till the clock struck three, when she descended to the drawing-room, where Dora and her mother were sitting, to summon her to dress.

"Dress at this hour, nurse! Do you know that Mr. Orlandby will not call for me till half-past five, and what should I do, sitting up in state for such a length of time?"

"And what great time have you to spare, Miss? Do you think when you are going to dine with people of breeding, that your hair can be wisped up as it is every day, or that a pin here and there will do? I will have trouble enough fixing you from top to toe, which can't be done in a minute: and then won't you have to show yourself to your aunt, and to walk slow through the hall, that the people may have a glimpse of you?"

"Time enough for all that, nurse. I will not dress till a quarter before five, when you shall have a full half-hour to do what you please with me; and the remainder of the time will be quite sufficient to exhibit myself to all the house, over and over again."

"Then you may get Kitty, with her clumsy hands, to dress you, for any trouble I will give myself about you. I dressed them of your family that had a title before their name, and they never counted out the minutes to me, because they knew what was becoming in ladies. Ma'am," turning to her mistress, "I wonder you don't check her, and give her some notions, if it was only for the sake of the people she is come of."

"You had better do as nurse wishes," said Mrs. Milward. "She has had a good deal of trouble all the morning; and if you wait till five o'clock, it will interfere with her dinner."

Dora, though convinced against her will, followed her mother's advice at once, and determined to undergo all nurse's threatened curling, and frizzing, and pinning, with a martyr's fortitude, which was a wise determination, for the operation lasted a full hour; during which time, her patience, though sorely tried, never once failed; and by seeming to enter fully into the spirit of the business, she contrived to have her own taste predominant, without offending that of Mrs. Burrowes, who was so pleased, that she kissed her at least a dozen times; and at every addition to her dress, discovered a new likeness to the numerous Oglandbys, whose pictures adorned the gallery of the family mansion.

"Now, nurse," said Dora, when the last pin was

declared to be fixed, and that Mrs. Burrowes had retreated a few paces in order to judge of the *tout ensemble*—"Now, nurse, I hope you will allow me to go down stairs, and sit quietly with my mother till the carriage comes."

"Stop only for one moment, my darling, and just take one look in the glass, and tell me if you don't like yourself. Do, Miss Dora, dear, to oblige me."

Dora was in an obliging mood, and she looked, and was pleased. "I assure you," said she, with the most unaffected simplicity, "I think I look remarkably well. I wonder will my mother think so?"

Father, mother, and aunt, did certainly think so, when she made her appearance in the drawing-room; though they did not express their admiration so plainly as Mrs. Burrowes, who made fifty excuses to come into the room, and each time stood for a minute or two, looking at her with undisguised satisfaction, and muttering blessings with great volubility. She had placed scouts on the watch for the first appearance of the carriage, and was becoming rather fidgety, when it was announced as having turned into the gate.

Immediately all hands were at work, shawling and cloaking.

"Dora, have you got on my fur slippers?" asked Mrs. Falconer.

"Double that shawl over your chest, my love," recommended her father.

"And muffle yourself up carefully from the night air on your return, my precious child," said her mother, as she gave her the parting kiss.

"And, oh! Miss Dora, don't be crumpling your

sleeves in that way," screamed Mrs. Burrowes. "Mind to give them a shake out when you get into the hall. Stop, Miss, I must go before you with the candle. Do you hear, Flood! Stretch that mat on the flag, to the step of the carriage; and one of you hold up an umbrella over her head, for the wind will tossicate her hair to nothing."

"Dora," called out the old gentlemen from the carriage, "never mind all that fuss, but get in at once. We shall be rather late as it is, and Lady Thorndale hates to be kept waiting."

But though he was an Oglandby, Mrs. Burrowes resisted his orders, and held Dora fast till the mat was spread, and then, without insisting on the umbrella, which could not be found in a hurry, permitted her to advance.

"Is that Miss Dora?" asked a shrill voice, the instant she appeared outside the door.

"It is," she replied, recognizing the voice of Lanty M'Grail, "but I cannot speak to you now."

"I have something for you, Miss," said he, as he pushed between Mrs. Burrowes and the servant who held the carriage-door.

"Thank you, thank you, Lanty," putting her hand on the footman's extended arm. "Come to-morrow, for you see I cannot speak to you now."

"Here it is, and you must have it now," persisted Lanty, who had forced his way close to her side, and raised a large milk-pail to a level with her head.

Her foot was on the step, but struck with the earnestness of his manner, she paused for a second, and in that second was deluged by a shower of liquid mud, which ran copiously from her head, in inky streams,

down the manifold draperies in which her figure was enveloped.

The shock took away her breath, and she rushed back into the hall, where she was in an instant surrounded by all who had witnessed the scene, not excepting old Mr. Oglandby, who jumped from the carriage with the agility of a man some thirty or forty years younger than himself.

Mr. and Mrs. Milward, and Mrs. Falconer, quickly joined the party in the hall; and for a few minutes the alarm of the family was truly distressing, as they could not guess the extent of the injury sustained by Dora, who sat, unable to speak, in a much more woful plight than we have ever heard related of the most unfortunate heroine of romance.

"I am not at all hurt," she said at last to her mother, who was hanging over her, pale with apprehension. "I am merely a little out of breath; and when I throw off these odious clothes, I shall be as well as ever."

Re-assured by her cheerful manner, one and all began to talk together, some asking questions, and some answering two or three at a time, till they were overpowered by the stentorian voice of Mr. Oglandby, who, in the bitterness of his disappointment, being as anxious for Dora's introduction to the world as Mrs. Burrowes herself, scolded every individual present, from the Honorable Mrs. Falconer, his niece, to the footman behind his carriage. He offered to wait half an hour—an hour, till Dora could be re-equipped. The Charlesborough clock might be slow, and, at all events, slow or fast, he would wait any reasonable

time. But reason was totally out of the question. Two hours of scrubbing, washing, brushing, and drying, could scarcely restore her to the state in which Mrs. Burrowes began her merely ornamental manœuvres; and being at length convinced of the hopelessness of the case, the old gentleman drove off in the very worst humour that a naturally irritable temper could produce.

When Dora had got rid of all her bespattered mufflings, and her face in some degree cleared of the mud, now fast hardening into a crust, so that she could see her way up stairs, she was again preceded by Mrs. Burrowes to her mother's dressing-room. *Hei mihi! quantum mutata,* in the space of one brief hour, when she had taken the self-complacent look at her figure, and was the object of admiration to the whole house. She now felt no inclination to take even a passing look at her present appearance, but quietly suffered herself to be disrobed by her half-bewildered attendant, who, with the assistance of Mrs. Falconer and Kitty Moore, made so decided an attack with soap and water, that all traces of her late bespattering quickly disappeared from her person; and their joint labour was expended in brushing, drying, and perfuming her hair, which had suffered most under Lanty's offering.

During this operation, she had a little time for collecting her scattered thoughts; and as the whole scene, and its consequences, rose to her view, poor Dora felt mortified to the quick. The disappointment was, in itself, sufficiently trying, but the consequences infinitely more so. She was aware of the

ludicrous light in which her adventure would be viewed, and in which Harriet Thorndale would certainly place it—tracing the progress of her friendship with her uncouth *protegé*, though all its stages, to the tragi-comic catastrophe, by which it was ended. She would gladly have compromised for a very slight fracture, or sprained ancle, or any trifling accident, which could have given a more sublime interest to her adventure; and she had nearly made up her mind to keep her bed for a few days, but through fear of alarming her mother. She was so completely engrossed by her own thoughts as scarcely to hear the threats of vengeance against Lanty, reiterated by Mrs. Burrowes, every time she wielded the comb-brush, or sprinkled lavender water through her hair; or the sage reflections of Mrs. Falconer, whose prophetical warnings against the mischievous propensities of the boy, had been completely disregarded under the canting plea of duty. There was no occasion to irritate Dora's feelings against the culprit, which were at the time, nearly as much divested of charity, as his worst enemy could wish. Whenever his name reached her ears, she involuntarily exclaimed to herself, "Ungrateful little urchin!"—"Abominable little wretch!" and such like spiteful expressions, which, though we are conscious may sink her in the opinion of our elegant or sentimental readers, were, nevertheless, very natural, considering the provocation, and the short time which she had to control her unruly feelings.

After nearly two hours' hard work, she was pronounced fit to be seen; and joined her father and

mother, at the tea-table, not without a little feeling of awkwardness, as she passed two or three of the servants, who remembered the cock-a-hoop air, with which she had descended the stairs, a short time before.

CHAPTER VI.

Although it may argue a liking for low company, yet we cannot resist the inclination to take leave of Miss Milward at the drawing-room door, and adjourn with Mrs. Burrowes to the kitchen, which she entered with an expression of countenance, that forbade any sympathy with her feelings, and silenced all the tongues, before going very glibly. The unfortunate new gown, with its enormous flimsy sleeves, spotted and stained, and splashed all over, hung upon her arm; and as she flung it upon the back of a chair, she burst into a violent fit of crying, which instead of soothing, seemed to increase her irritability. The servants saw that a storm was coming; and each felt uneasy till they knew on which of them it would expend its fury. They were not long kept in suspense, for it blew a hurricane upon Flood, the footman, for letting Lanty escape.

"I can't see what use there is in fellows like you about a gentleman's place, if you let monkeys and ruffians destroy and murder every body, and never move a hand to punish them."

"Never believe me, Ma'am," said Flood, with great earnestness, "but I was so taken by surprise, if I knew that I had a hand upon my body, when I saw the outlandish villany of the young thief."

"Didn't you know, then, that you had a pair of legs that are nimble enough to run after your own

business? Yet you would'nt put one foot before the other to catch that evil-minded natural, who may be the death of us all, now that he has got off scot-free to plot more mischief."

"It's little business of my own I can do," said Flood, "with all the running and scampering I have in this house; but one word for all, Mrs. Burrowes, I was so beside myself that I could do no more than yourself, and that was little enough. Who's at the door there?" he cried loudly, glad of any interruption to the housekeeper's eloquence.

"Good luck to your work," said Ileen Garvey, entering, with her cloak over her head, and addressing Kitty Moore, who was wiping the handle of her dust-pan. "I was forced to run off in this condition, for word came to the Mistress, that Lanty M'Grail was after pisoning Miss Dora; and I thought she would have fainted, or dropt down dead upon the spot, when she heard it: so she bid me run for my life, dark as it was, and be back in no time; but I hope it isn't true, seeing yees all so lively."

"He done his best to murder her," answered Kitty, "only she had a wonderful escape for her life; and you wouldn't know now that a haporth was the matter with her."

"I'm as glad to hear that," said Ileen, with a glow of pleasure over her animated countenance, "as if I got a new pair of shoes. But how was it at all, Kitty dear? And what come over Miss Dora, to take any thing out of his dirty hands?"

"Ah! how could she help it?" began Kitty; but her harangue was stopped by Mrs. Burrowes, who chose to tell the whole story; which she gave, with

many circumstances purely imaginative, such as the strong smell of vitriol, which she perceived the moment the contents of the pail descended on her young lady's head, and other horrors of a like nature.

"But," said she, as a climax to all she had been relating, "look at the destruction he has brought upon us all!" and she displayed the ill-fated gown to Ileen's astonished gaze.

"Oh! murder!" cried the girl, quite overcome. "I wouldn't wonder if he was gibbeted after that—such a beautiful thing my eyes never looked on afore!—And was it that she had on, ma'am, when he was tempted by his foolishness?"

"The very one, Ileen, and no other. I dressed her in it myself, not passing an hour before. It only came from Dublin last week, a present from her grand-uncle, Mr. John Oglandby."

"It's the admiration, sure enough, if it was clane," said Ileen, venturing to touch it. "What a power of waste there is in them sacks of sleeves!—Why, they would make caps for the mistress, for seven years to come. Oh! Lanty, Lanty, I'm afraid it's all over with you after that job; and would you believe me, Ma'am, if I didn't think him well-natured. Many's the kittle of water he has run for, for myself, when I had two things to do at a time, as girls often has in a throng of a hurry."

"He, well natured!" exclaimed Mrs. Burrowes; but her wrath was diverted from Ileen by the voice of Johnny Monroe speaking to the footman.

"Archy Flood," he began, "I am one that have seen plenty in my days, that would take the sight

from many with failing hearts; and though I am shaking now, I can bear any thing, let it be ever so bad. So, if Miss Dora is dead, by the blow of the stone from that unfortunate boy, speak it out, without beating about the bush. It is better when a man knows the worst at once, for then he is prepared for what comes after."

"It wasn't a blow of a stone she got at all; it was only some dirty water; and she's now above stairs, pouring out the tea, as well as yourself, Johnny, if not better."

"Johnny," said Mrs. Burrowes, "sit down here on this chair, beside me, and I will tell you all about it, better than Archy, who, by his own account, never knows whether he is standing on his head or his heels."

She then recapitulated her story, with even more embellishments than Ileen had been treated to, and ended by directing his attention to the lamentable state of the spick-and-span new gown.

"Small matter about that, Mrs. Burrowes," answered Monroe. "Weavers and women-stichers would toss up a hundred of that sort of tackling, as fast as they are wanted: and since the dear child herself has come off safe, it isn't a christianable thing to be fretting about trifles."

"What do you mean, Jonny Monroe? Do you call all the money's worth there a trifle? Do you think that clothes like that can be got every day, only to drag through the gutter?"

"No Ma'am; I wouldn't misuse the poorest rag after that fashion, let alone things above my station. But, after all, Mrs. Burrowes, the grandest piece of

dress that ever came out of the loom, what will it come to in the end? Sure it is only made for the rust and moth to have their will of at last; and seeing that is its destination, I would be sorry to give one thought of my heart about any thing of the kind, if it come to an untimely end."

"Why then, Johnny," said Ileen, "I could sit down and cry my eyes out, when I look at the desolation of that lovely gownd; and I would give all I am worth in the world, to have seen Miss Dora stepping into the coach, in her grandeur and beautifulness, before that Willy-the-wisp got her in his clutches."

"Why did you not run over Ileen?" said Mrs. Burrowes. "I would have put you in the best place for a view—and, sure enough, you had the loss—for in all that I ever saw, I never saw the equal to her, as she waited, while Flood was bungling about the mat: and though you could only see the bottom of her dress, being covered up by her aunt's old shawl, yet, old as it was, it could not conceal the gentlewoman in grain. I could compare her to nothing, when she raised her hand to put it on Frank Dyer's arm, and looked round at the frog, just preparing to spit his venom at her, but a queen, who was going to give her blessing to her followers."

"I was standing close behind the family," said Monroe, who had been shaking his head, while Mrs. Burrowes was speaking, "the day she was brought into the church to be baptized; and I heard them that feared God, and looked to his blessed Son, while they renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, in her name—they have gone to their rest; but

her parents have a better right to think closely for her good: and indeed, I wonder why they would let one so young, and so innocent, and so unguarded, run headlong into the temptations of company-keeping, knowing the evil of it themselves."

"There is no evil, or no temptation, about her, but what is in your own head, Johnny Monroe. If you wonder at the doings of real quality, I wonder that a man with so much religion for ever on his tongue, can be glad that Miss Dora should be killed, all to a chance, and that her property was lavished and ruined by the scum of the earth."

"Ah! Mrs. Burrowes, you look at it the wrong way: I could not be glad for the wind to blow contrary on that dear child, who I watched with prayers and blessings, since she first saw the day. I am sore sorry for the nasty trick was played on her; and I am sorry that a tatter belonging to her would be offended; but there's no harm in making the best of what can't be mended, when I know that it's all for good. She will see that yet; and yourself may, one day, be glad that you met with this little tossication."

"Oh! stop your talking," cried the lady, impatiently. "It's fine doctrine to be preaching, that wickedness is a good thing, and that people ought to be glad for the worst of badness. If you were to go on with your religious words for a year, you wouldn't take the grief and bitterness out of my heart. Haven't I the whole elegant party at Charlesborough this minute before my eyes, in all their state and full dress, as becomes their station—and don't I know that she, who would have all eyes upon her, if she was there, is making tea up stairs, in the old plated tea-pot, in

loneliness and sorrow—and will any one tell me that is as it ought to be?"

The picture of her own painting was so moving, that she again burst into tears, and continued sobbing as if her heart would break.

Ileen, who should have long since gone home, was so occupied with listening to the different versions of the story, as given by each servant in turn, and also in getting an exact and minute account of every article of dress worn by Miss Milward on that evening, that she neither knew nor cared how time passed, till she was brought to her recollection by the unwelcome apparition of her mistress, who, attended by the cowboy, was already in the middle of the kitchen, before any one perceived her entrance.

It was the moment when the housekeeper's grief was at the highest, and Mrs. Costigan supposed, from the general appearance of the household, that her worst fears were realized. A cold shivering came over her limbs, and as she tottered to a seat, she said reproachfully to her maid—

"You might have saved me this blow, at least, if you had the feeling to come home, as you ought, and not bring me out after you, being worn out with waiting; but now, lend me your hand, and let you and Tim drag me home this minute, as well as you can; for I would not look one of the family in the face for more than the sun ever shone upon."

"Ah! mistress dear!" said Ileen, running over to her, "don't be daunted so asy. Miss Dora and all the family is come to no loss, barring in the matter of an elegant new gownd, that's splashed to no end, and

that Mrs. Burrowes can't stop fretting after. Sure if I had any thing bad to tell, I would have been with you in a hurry; and I was only waiting to hear every word of news, for 'fraid I would have my journey back again if I didn't bring all."

Mrs. Costigan, who was a parlour visitor, made no small sensation in the kitchen. Mrs. Burrowes quickly dried her eyes, and forgot her grief in her anxiety to relate, for the third time, the disastrous event of the evening. Mrs. Costigan was interested in every stage of the story; and when it reached the lamentable conclusion, her expressions of anger were to the full as violent as those of the animated narrator. But she had as little sympathy for the gown as Monroe himself, though her indifference was expressed in other terms.

"Oh! toss it to the rag-bag at once, nurse. Since she is safe, who cares if it was washed in the kennel? Her old grand-uncle, who gave her that, can give her twenty better ones if he liked it; and it would be no harm if his purse was open oftener than it is."

Mrs. Burrowes was nearly as much annoyed by the philosophy of the one comforter, as by the religion of the other. She, however, did not permit any impatient expression to escape her, farther than by saying, "Well, well! it's a pity for all that, to see the good gentleman's present treated worse than the commonest linsey wolsey. But, Mrs. Costigan, I hope you won't take Johnny Monroe's part against me, and want me to be joyful and glad, because my child was nearly put out of the world."

"Why, then, Johnny, did you leave your senses after you in the army, that there was room for such a thought in your head?" asked Mrs. Costigan.

"Mrs. Burrowes, Ma'am," he replied, "misunderstands my meaning, from first to last. I only wanted to make her sensible that nothing happens by chance, but that the disappointments and trials which the people of God meet with in this world, are all intended to work together for their good. It would be foolish to talk of Miss Dora's accident under the name of a misfortune; yet, trifling as it looks, I will be bold to say, that it was not allowed by Him who rules above, and whose child I well believe she is, without a wise meaning in it. She will see that yet, and be glad he stopped her in her own course. She will see it sometime or other, either here or hereafter—how do I know which?"

"How do you know so much about it, any way?" inquired Mrs. Costigan, sharply, "that you speak so confidently. How did you travel so far up, as to find out what God thinks, or what he does? But," she continued very quickly, as if to hinder a reply, "I believe I guess what you will make answer, and I don't want any conversation of that kind now." Then turning to Mrs. Burrowes, "I am entirely curious, nurse, to know what you did to Lanty?"

"Ask Archy Flood there, what he did to him; and ask the coachman, and Pat Toole, for they were all standing by, and let him walk off cool and easy, without so much as saying one word to him."

"It was all done, Ma'am," said Flood, "as Mrs. Burrowes well knows, before you could tell the half of it; and when he did the mischief, he was over the

paling like a shot, so that if we had a hundred legs and arms between us, we could not catch him. But if ever he puts his nose inside the gate again, he'll be sorry for it."

"Aye, or that old witch his grandmother, who is the hatcher of all the mischief that is done in Ireland," said Mrs. Burrowes. "Mind I tell every one of you, that if Alice O'Neil ever darkens this door"—

Her speech was cut short by the appearance of the very identical Alice, slowly and cautiously opening the door, which so astounded the lady, that she sa staring at her, without the power of giving utterance to her indignation.

But the forbearance of the housekeeper was of no avail to poor Alice, against whom the tongues of all the servants were instantly in motion; and the old woman, who had the credit of being the greatest scold in the county, was so completely overcome by the torrents of abuse from all quarters, that she could only clasp her hands, and look pitifully round on her persecutors.

"I beg pardon," said she, the moment she could obtain a hearing—"I beg pardon of yees all, every one of yees, gentle and simple, if ever I offended one of yees, man, woman, or child. It is no pushingness, nor looking for nothing, that brought me out this could blowing night, but that it is through the country that my unfortunate orphant was unmannerly to Miss Dora, and I want to know what he done, that I may punish him when I lay hould on him."

"Take no trouble about that," said Flood, "for he

wove a web for himself to-night will do for his winding-sheet. He'll be hung as round as a ball before he is a quarter older."

"And if he deserves it, much good may it do him," said the good-natured grandmother. "I will never say one word in his favour. But just tell me which of yees vexed him, to make him behave like what he never did afore?"

"Go out of the house this minute, you notorious vagrant!" cried the housekeeper, recovering the use of her tongue. "Who knows but you have a bag of gunpowder in your pocket to blow us all up. Go out of the house, I say, and never venture into my presence again!"

"And look out for a new lodging as quick as you please," said Mrs. Costigan; "for my husband won't suffer bad people on his land. If you don't flit before twelve o'clock to-morrow, I will order the men to tear the roof off your cabin, and scatter the walls of it to the four corners of the parish, before you shall sleep in it another night."

"And send me back the needle I lent you, Saturday was eight days," added the dairy-maid; "not that I'll ever do a stitch with it again, only I want to have done with you."

"And be cautious how you ever pass the gate," said Pat Toole, the turf-boy, "for my name isn't Pat, if I won't set all the dogs in the parish after you."

"Oh! boys and girls," cried Monroe, "keep in mind that she is a fellow-creature, and has feelings in her mind like one of ourselves. The worst that ever trod the earth oughtn't to be threatened with the

usage of wild beasts, or despised as if they were not God's making."

"I like to hear you speak in that way, Johnny," said Ileen, "for though, if I was put to my oath, I darn't say that I loved a bone in the skin of some people, (glancing at Alice,) still I couldn't despise them into the shape of horses and cows."

"Och! och!" whined Alice—"and isn't the cattle, and the dumb brutes better off nor me this night, with the punishment I have in my body, let alone what you are putting off your tongues again me. Good luck to yees, and lave me in pace the little time I'll be among yees; for I'm going fast with every complaint anunder the sun. The back is dropping out of me, I have a cough would kill the world, and all that's nothing to the pain in my bones."

"You see, Ma'am," said Monroe, "it mightn't be fair to put much blame upon the poor creature, without reasoning cases first. The boy is headstrong, like all that has his failing, and he may be revengeful, as they often are, though I never judged it to be that way with him before. Moreover, last Sunday he was vexed with Miss Dora, for not giving him a bit of a cap when he was unruly; and it's my belief that *that* cap brought the trouble on him, without this poor woman having act or part in it."

"Mr. Monroe," cried Alice, "if *I wasn't expected* this minute, I'd make my affidavit about the cap. He stomached it wonderful; though I led him the life of a dog, when he drew it down at-all, at-all. I may lay his going to the bad, entirely upon that school. Before he went to it, he was as biddable as

a child; but after he tuck a book in hand—I might whistle for the mile-stone to dance, and it would do it sooner nor he would mind a word from me."

"To my mind," said Monroe, "and after the judging of others, he was only the better for going to school, Alice."

"Och! och!" she continued, "I was the unlucky woman to let him put a foot inside a school, and I never would, only I thought Miss Dora would chastise him like any other schoolmaster, and not let him run wild. But I hope she'll wattle him well next Sunday, till his four bones aches for a month."

"Listen to her!" said Mrs. Burrowes. "You are too ignorant to talk sense to, you pest of an old woman. Do you think a lady come of her stock would demean herself to touch that scald-crow of a grandson of yours?"

"I beg your pardon, Ma'am, for making so bould to speak to yees at all—only seeing that she will have him at the book, I thought she might do to him, as is done to every child like him."

"Child, indeed!" said Mrs. Costigan. "You'll not get out of the scrape that way. I have good reason for knowing that his father was transported sixteen years, last lady-day in harvest; and he was a lump of a boy, in arms, at the time. Why the ill-thriven thing must be close on eighteen this very minute."

"You always had the fine memry," said Alice, "and I hope it will be left with you—not like me, who often can't tell if I'm alive or dead. All I know is this, that from the hour he was born, he was my torment, and my drag: and it's a poor thing if he'll

be my ruin, out and out, with every friend I have in the world."

"If you were to go away, Alice," said Monroe, "it would be no harm. People's minds won't always see the justice of a thing when they are in a confusion. Mrs. Costigan will think twice, before she puts you out; and as for the parson, he won't visit the sins of others upon you."

"Oh! Mrs. Costigan!" cried the housekeeper, seeing her about to follow Alice, "you won't leave the house, till you see them up stairs. We would have fine work on our hands, if the mistress knew you were here, and didn't see you."

It was fruitless for Mrs. Costigan to protest and expostulate, and show her shoes, and her rumpled cap, and to make half-a-hundred other excuses. Flood was despatched to the drawing-room, and the next minute Mr. Milward himself was ushering her up stairs.

"Sir," said Monroe, who had followed them from the kitchen, "would it be looked on as above my station, if I asked just to get one look at Miss Dora, and to say a word to her that is in my mind. I won't keep her half a minute, if she only puts her head out of the door to me."

Dora met her friend in the hall, the moment her father told her his wishes.

"Now I am content," said he, "for I see you are not a hair the worse, for that poor deluded creature's evil intentions. Ah! Miss Dora, be grateful, as you ought, and don't be discontented at what there's some reason for, if we could see it. Don't be angry

with me, Miss; but I can't help being better pleased to have you sitting with your own dear christianable parents, than flaunting in grandeur with them that leave their souls to chance. You're not angry with me, Miss, for saying so much to you, that maybe isn't my business?"

"Not at all, Mr. Monroe: I am truly obliged for your good wishes and good advice. I am really endeavouring not to feel my little disappointment, as I am sure it is all for the best. After this evening I shall never throw away a thought on the subject."

"You are a wonderful creature for your years! No, no; no wonder about it, considering your rearing. But I'll not keep you any longer from them who have the best right to your company, and who may well be proud of you—only pride don't become us; and nobody ought to be proud if they could help it."

Mrs. Costigan had never been at Rathedmond since the death of her child, and had dreaded the first visit, as an event which would strongly bring back recollections of a very painful nature; but fortunately it was made under such circumstances as precluded the possibility of being solely occupied with her own feelings. She had a vague idea that she ought to be particularly unhappy, but there was no time to arrange her ideas in their proper order; and she was, perhaps, glad of the confusion, which gave an odd kind of rest to her mind, by changing its usual bent. Again she asked the same round of questions in the drawing-room, which had been so fully answered in the kitchen; and again threatened such a full mea-

sure of vengeance against Lanty and his grandmother, that the injured party had to intercede strongly in their favour. She at length promised, that if Ned Costigan would say nothing about turning them out, she would not plead against them; and after sitting for some time, prescribing for Mrs. Milward, and admiring Mrs. Falconer's netting, and beseeching of Dora to wash her hands entirely of the Sunday-school, summoned Ileen, and Tim Lonegan, the cow-boy, to attend her home.

CHAPTER VII.

The interest excited by Miss Milward's adventure, which would, at any other time, have supplied "argument for, at least, a week," if not "a good joke for ever," was but of a few hours continuance, being absorbed in that produced by the more serious attack upon Mr. Oglandby, on his return from dining at Charlesborough. As our readers are in full possession of the conspiracy, we shall not keep them in suspense as to the event. The intention of the murderers was providentially frustrated by their aiming too high; so that most of the slugs and bullets passed through the roof of the carriage, above the old gentleman's head, which had sunk upon his breast while enjoying a comfortable nap; and the coachman, though wounded in the shoulder, was able to drive him home in safety.

Mr. Oglandby was one of those persons to whom notoriety is every thing. To be born to "blush unseen," would have been to him the most dire calamity; and he would at any time have endured a certain quantum of personal inconvenience, provided he was an object of general interest or curiosity. When, therefore, on the following morning he found himself alive and well, and that the coachman's wound was pronounced slight, he enjoyed the degree of consequence accruing to him, from the attempt on his life,

with great satisfaction, which was proportionably increased, when his hat was discovered to be perforated with a bullet—a circumstance completely overlooked in the confusion of the preceding night. He gave orders to his servants with a less dictatorial air than usual, as if conscious that his present situation required no extraneous aid to give him consequence in the eyes of the world. The hat was laid on the table, the carriage wheeled within view of the windows, the coachman's wounded coat placed in a conspicuous situation, and he seated himself in his kangaroo chair, impatiently expecting the arrival of visitors.

Some of our readers may be inclined to find fault with us for dwelling upon this exhibition of childish vanity, without alluding to those better feelings which must have found place in his mind, when so providentially saved from a violent death. We may be reminded, that the most callous heart will feel a throb of gratitude when the hair-breadth escape is fresh in the memory and it would be gratifying to hear, that one who had been the recipient of manifold mercies for threescore years and ten, would, on so manifest an interference in his favour, offer up the glowing thanksgivings of a grateful heart to the "Preserver of men." But we have no such gratifying theme on which to expatiate. If ever a flash of pious feeling glanced on his imagination at the recollection of his escape, it was imperceptible to all, but to "Him who searcheth the heart." He appeared studiously to avoid all reference to the Great First Cause; and ascribed his preservation to chance, or

good luck, and particularly to the wind, which had blown out the crazy lamps a few minutes before the carriage reached the grove.

"You may thank the wind for saving you the expense of putting your whole family in mourning, Harry," said he to Mr. Milward, who was the first to make personal inquiries after him; "for if the lamps had given them light to take proper aim, you would have been an uncle out of pocket. I should have been as dead as a mackarel, Harry."

"Your thanks, and mine, Sir, are due to him who 'walketh upon the wings of the wind,'" replied Mr. Milward.

"Very well said, indeed, and quite in the way of your profession, which is as it ought to be. But as my trade is not preaching, allow me to express myself as I please. Look at that hat, Harry: the ball passed within a quarter of an inch of my head. If any body had been sitting with me in the carriage"——

The old gentleman's voice faltered: for though the company of his beautiful niece would have added treble interest to the scene in which he had been a principal actor, yet he could not contemplate the danger she had escaped, without betraying emotions which he considered unmanly; and he summoned a violent fit of coughing to his aid, for the purpose of concealing them. When the paroxysm was over, Mr. Milward, who was scarcely less agitated than himself, endeavoured to improve the subject to his edification, but he suddenly shifted his ground, and asked, with much asperity of manner—

"What is the cause of the present lawless state of the lower orders? Answer me that, Harry."

"I have repeatedly given you my opinion on that subject, Sir; but, unfortunately, we do not see the matter in the same light."

"And I have as repeatedly given you my opinion, and you have as repeatedly shut your eyes against plain, matter-of-fact evidence. Mind, I say, matter-of-fact, Harry. In my young days, the people were quiet, and loyal, and civil, and orderly; yet not one man in fifty could sign his name, or distinguish one letter from another. Then a gentleman might ride, or walk, or drive, at all hours, without the slightest apprehension—now you have educated them with a vengeance. Every common labourer on your ground can read, and write, and cypher—and what is the consequence? Look at that hat, and that coat, and that chaise. They speak volumes of matter-of-fact, which all your theories and novelties cannot contradict."

"I am not competent, Sir, to judge of the character of the lower orders in your young days, except by report, which leads me to suppose it not so very exemplary as you imagine. I have heard of Whiteboys, and Peep-o'-day-boys, and boys of other denominations, all employed in the same outrages—all exhibiting the same savage propensities with the Rockites of the present day."

"They were not half so bad. Their's was mere child's play, compared with the enormities of the educated gentlemen of the present generation: and for this good reason, they had not the power to do mischief to the same extent—that power which you and other lady and gentleman philanthropists, have so benevolently supplied to their descendants."

"They had not the same physical force," replied Mr. Milward. "The population has increased enormously since that period."

"Physical nonsense! They always swarmed like rabbits in a burrow. Listen to me, Harry. My father, your wife's grandfather, who represented this county thirty-seven years, and who knew the character of every individual in it, often gave it as his decided opinion, founded on long experience, that the beginning of every villany could be traced to the half-dozen fellows who knew how to read and write. Schoolmaster and mischief-monger were synonymous terms with him. And when my own experience is supported by the opinion of such a man, can I look upon your adult schools, and week-day schools, and Sunday schools in any other light, than so many nurseries of insubordination and rebellion?"

"Perhaps, Sir, I should agree with your father more than you are aware of; for he could scarcely have a worse opinion of such schoolmasters as he alluded to, than I have. I think they do incalculable mischief; and my efforts have been unceasing to get rid of them out of the country. But to your first position—that education has produced such a fearful increase of crime. How do you account for the fact, that the only persons in this, and the neighbouring parishes, who have never been implicated in deeds of violence, are those who have received their education in the schools which meet with your so very decided disapprobation?"

"That is all assertion, Harry. The fact remains to be proved. I say that the whole world is going to

school, and, of consequence, is growing worse and worse every day."

"What I have asserted, Sir, can be proved; and I appeal, not merely to this neighbourhood, but to the country at large, for the proof. There is one very simple mode of gaining information on this point. Search the jails of every county in Ireland, and out of the aggregate of prisoners confined on charges of an outrageous nature, we boldly challenge you to produce one in fifty—I might say, an hundred—who has had the benefit of a scriptural education."

"Very fine talk, Harry: and, no doubt, you believe all that you have been saying. However, you must excuse me making a tour of inquiry. I am content to take your word for the truth of your statement. But, if education has given such a check to crime, how am I to account for it, that so many of your enlightened pupils are, at this moment, candidates, not only for the jail, but for the gallows?"

"That, Sir, is a fact of which I was not before aware."

"No, Harry, because you willingly shut your eyes against matter of fact. You are not aware, that you and my Lady Thorndale have been educating the parish for the last seventeen years, and that Mr. O'Floggin is also educating hard and fast? Witness the shoals of dirty little brats running from the chapel every Sunday morning, a thing never heard of, till you set the example with your Sunday schools. And you are not aware that an attempt was, last night, made upon my life by some of those fellows, who have learned all sorts of accomplishments in your seminaries?"

"I much doubt the fact, Sir. At all events, time will tell. We have certainly offered the means of education to the whole parish, but you know, full well, that a very small part, indeed, of the population has been permitted to take advantage of it. As to Mr. O'Floggin's system, I do not advocate it, believing it, like all others emanating from such quarters, to be worse than bad. Neither would I be supposed to allege, that there may not have been individual instances of disappointment in the case of young persons who were well instructed. But judging from pretty long experience, I must still persist in declaring, that the only counteraction hitherto of any avail to the manifold evils under which this unhappy country suffers, (from whatever causes they may have proceeded,) is the scriptural education which we have been attempting to disseminate among the lower orders."

"You will never make a convert of me to your opinion, Harry; so try your hand upon Fitzcarrol and his puppy of a son, who I see riding down the avenue. I cannot say, but it is very good-natured of them to call so soon, though they are, one and other, the most tiresome pair on the face of the earth."

Mr. Fitzcarrol, it may be perceived, was not a favourite with the old gentleman; nor was he more fortunate with any of the aristocracy of the country, being very generally unpopular, by assuming a degree of consequence to which neither his birth, education, or fortune, entitled him. He was the son of a farmer, who, by dint of hard industry, scraped together the purchase-money of a small estate, which, with one or two very valuable leases in perpetuity, made him

what is called a warm man, but never elevated him quite to the rank of a gentleman: whether from his own humility, or that real gentlemen were more common in Ireland at that time than now, we have no data on which to form an opinion. A long minority, and honest guardians, added considerably to the original property; and when the heir arrived at the age of twenty-one, there was a handsome sum in hands, which being judiciously laid out in another purchase, he, at once, started into life as an indubitable, estated gentleman.

Being a young man of spirit—or, in more truth-telling phrase, a very impudent fellow—he made the most of himself; and while some laughed at him, and others endeavoured to chill him to a proper distance, others gave way to his pretensions, and quietly permitted him to stand on the same level with themselves, without noticing the awkward jumps he had to make before he arrived at it. Among the acquiescents were the Braymores, a family of some consideration in the country, who patronised him, at first through opposition to the Oglandbys, and afterwards for the more amiable reason of the close connexion between them, when one of the daughters of the family condescended to accept him for a husband. There was a good deal of coquetting with the father and brothers, and other relatives, on his first advances; but there was a superfluity of daughters, with very slender portions, and a lamentable lack of marrying men in the country at the time, so that his overtures were, on the whole, very well received: and as the head of the house of Austria, when he had matched his daughter with the Corsican *parvenu*,

was anxious to trace his descent from some princely stock, so the Braymores broadly insinuated that their new relative was come of gentle blood, though it had flowed through rather muddy channels, for a few generations, and tacitly apologised for the connection, by a retrospect to a pedigree so ancient, as to mock the researches of that most enthusiastic of all enthusiasts—an Irish antiquary. Napoleon, it is said, had the good taste to despise the petty imposture, and silenced his imperial father-in-law, by coldly remarking, that he was the Rodolph of his own fortune; but Hector Fitzcarrol, Esq. entered so fully into the spirit of the hunt after ancestry, that he fairly distanced his wife's relatives, who were afterwards often annoyed by the airs of the young masters and misses Fitzcarrol on the score of family. But none resisted the ancestorial encroachments like the Oglandbys. They had borne much in dignified silence—had merely shrugged their shoulders at the enclosure of a deer-park at Carrolsfort, formerly Bally Geraghty—had calmly tolerated the two silver soup-tureens, though much handsomer than those at Oglandby Castle; but when he talked of his family, they resisted the intrusion on their privileged ground with a degree of heat more than the provocation might be supposed to deserve; and consequently, the feud which from time immemorial had subsisted between them and the Braymores, broke out with double animosity.

Still Hector pushed his way, and aimed at being a leading man in the county, which had already more than a sufficiency of such worrying personages. He found it, however, difficult to gain much ground, be-

fore the Union; but when that measure was effected, he advanced half-a-dozen steps without much effort. One or two large estates were sold in divisions, and the proprietors fled in despair to England. The heir of the Oglandbys, never afterwards visited the seat of his ancestors, content with drawing regularly every shilling of his rents—Lord Colverston seldom resided many months together in Ireland; and Sir Ralph Thorndale was born to be a very second-rate kind of personage, at any period, or in any country. But the tide in his affairs which led on to fortune, was his sudden change of politics, in the very nick of time. From being a furious Protestant, he at once became a decided emancipator, and got all the credit of his brother-in-law's change of sentiments, being six months in the field before Mr. Braymore read his recantation in the House of Commons. Now he was really the idol of the Roman Catholics, who before regarded him with pretty nearly the same feelings, as those indulged by the African slave towards his whip-wielding overseer. He was eulogized from every altar, and huzzaed as he passed through the markets, and trumpeted in all the public prints which advocated the cause of emancipation. In return for these grateful and gratifying demonstrations of public consideration, he oratorized, and blustered, and prophesied, and abused the police and Lord Colverston. A few days before the attack on Mr. Oglandby, he had, at a meeting of magistrates, pledged himself to preserve the peace of the country, with the assistance of Mr. O'Floggin, provided Lady Thorndale would dismiss her schoolmistress, who was a convert, and not require the Roman Catholic children to read the Tes-

tament. Her Ladyship, who was "every thing by starts, and nothing long," was more complying than he either expected or desired: the schoolmistress was packed off at a moment's warning, and the Testaments locked up. He was, therefore, puzzled how to redeem his pledge; and, for the first time during many years, he felt a slight sensation of awkwardness creeping over him, as he slowly followed the servant into Mr. Oglandby's study.

His son, Mr. Conolly Fitzcarrol, was as little at ease, though from a totally different cause. He was the counterpart of his father, except that he had even more pretensions; for, whereas the elder only aimed at being a great man, the son's ambition was to be also a fine man. Some specimens of English finery, which now and then appeared at Lord Colverston's, or Sir Ralph Thorndale's, had early impressed him with an ardent desire to be like them; and he carefully registered every word, look, and motion, to be used on their appropriate occasions. Two flying visits to London had contributed to perfect what these occasional advantages had begun—not, we must confess, that even the name of Fitzcarrol could get him into good company, or indeed into any company, properly so called; but any body acquainted with London, knows that there are most valuable opportunities of improvement in air, &c. to be had, not only at the opera, but also at bazaars, and other fashionable lounges, where a young man, anxious for improvement, may copy after the most approved models, and from their operations in public, can form a tolerably good idea, how they comport themselves in private.

There is, however, this disadvantage to a person in

Mr. Conolly Fitzcarrol's circumstances, that it is impossible to be prepared by such casual glances, for all the changes in fashionable manners, which often take place at head-quarters; nor will the transplantation of a single exotic, for a few weeks, to Ireland, be always satisfactory. Some plants will only flourish in their mother earth—remove them with the greatest care, and adapt the soil and temperature as much as possible to their original situations, and still they insensibly degenerate. A stranger may be deceived into thinking that he sees them in full perfection; but he, who has had the good fortune to admire them in their native bed, perceives the difference immediately. The shape of the flower is the same, but the brilliancy of tint is wanting, and the fragrant odour is scarcely perceptible.

Thus it is with the importations of English high life, which, like meteoric flashes, sometimes illuminate our foggy atmosphere; and we seriously give it as our opinion, that it is not safe to take them as patterns, if their stay be protracted beyond a fortnight. They positively deteriorate, unless they have the advantage of the mess-table, or at least go in pairs, or are morally headless and heartless.

In the preceding autumn, the Honourable Colonel Toppington, who paid a long promised visit to the Marquess of ———, contrived for a few days to preserve the exquisite edge of high-breeding unblunted; but whether he wanted a companion to keep him in countenance, or discovered that he was "wasting his sweetness on the desert air," he, at once, disencumbered himself of his panoply, offensive and defensive; and in a shooting excursion through the province,

metamorphosed himself so completely, that on his arrival at Traffield House, he was *only* an unaffected, elegant gentleman, willing to be pleased, and cheerfully accommodating himself to the habits and feelings of those with whom he associated. Poor Conolly was completely taken in. He knew that Colonel Toppington was the very essence of fashion; and not being aware, that he saw him at one of those times, when nature, however bolted and barred out at other times, and kept at arms length by the sword of fashion, will force her way, and resume for a time her dominion, took for granted, that nature had nothing to do with the matter, and set to, with might and main, to imitate the lively, playful, and thoroughly well-bred manners of the English fashionable. During fourteen happy months, he was Colonel Toppington; and was congratulating himself on his good fortune in having met with such a phœnix, when the arrival of the sleepy, lisping, lounging, vegetating Lord Farnmere, who was gazetted as the *non plus ultra* of perfection, opened his eyes to the delusion under which he had lain so long, and called upon him imperatively to retrace his steps. But how was this to be done? Light and darkness were not more opposite than his two prototypes; and the sudden transition from the airy gaiety of the one, to the pensive listlessness of the other, would inevitably draw down upon him the ridicule of his half-hundred cousins, the Braymores, who were generally not very delicate in their raillery. The dilemma in which he was placed was therefore very distressing; but on the present occasion he made up his mind to practise on Mr. Milward, and a few

quiet people, who arrived soon after at the Carragh.

We shall not detain our readers by describing any of the other visitors, now rapidly dropping in—we shall let them speak for themselves in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

"It is the most unaccountable thing I ever heard of," said Mr. Fitzcarrol, after hearing Mr. Oglandby's story, and subjecting the hat and coat to a very severe scrutiny. "I never remember the country so quiet as at this moment, except the usual murmurs about tithes and parish-cess, which are enough to raise a rebellion at any time. You must excuse me, Mr. Milward, speaking my mind so freely; but things are coming to a crisis, and there is no use in mincing matters. I fear we must expect very bad doings, indeed, till there is some change in the mode of paying gentlemen of your cloth."

"Upon my honour, Mr. Fitzcarrol," said a red-faced, elderly man, with something of a gentlemanly air, though rather shabbily dressed, "they think it a hardship to pay their dues to gentlemen of any cloth, as I find to my cost."

"Could it be possible," continued Mr. Fitzcarrol, addressing himself to Mr. Oglandby, without noticing the last speaker, "that this affair, which certainly has an ugly look, might be nothing more than the awkwardness of a few idle boys, who were shooting owls in the grove? They very often make parties there for that purpose."

"Not at-all unlikely," replied the old gentleman, sarcastically. "It is so usual for boys to go out fowling with blunderbusses loaded with slugs. You

are an old sportsman, Willy," speaking to him with the red face, "and what is your opinion on this point?"

"Ah! What matter about the opinion of a man down in the world like me?" said Willy. "But if I was what I was, the first day I put on my regimentals, I would say that I never heard so outlandish a come-off, since the hour my grandfather sold my lawful property, for an old song, to Mr. Fitzcarrol's father there."

"I merely mentioned the thing as a possibility," said Fitzcarrol, still turning a deaf ear to Willy, "for I really cannot account for it otherwise. I was speaking to Terence Mulvaney, on my way here, this morning—you know Terence—a shrewd, sensible man; and he agreed with me, that it was altogether unaccountable. He assured me that you were always a very popular character, which I could vouch for myself; and when I hinted, that perhaps the ejectment of those ten families, last May, might have injured your popularity, he protested that it was no such thing, as they were universally esteemed a nuisance."

"Oh! fair and softly, Hector," cried Willy; "the poor people had as good a character as their neighbours: and if they did turn their little oats into a drop of whiskey, why, small blame to them, in that back place, where it was hard for the guager to come at them unknownst—considering, too, the ready sale it had with the gentlemen, not leaving yourself out of the number; for many a keg was left in my dunghill, till your driver would come at night to carry it off."

"Mr. Geraghty," said Hector, drawing himself up, "if you interrupt me every moment, it is impossible that we can proceed with business. Mulvaney also told me, that you had behaved so generously to your worthless tenants that your character, as a landlord, was higher than ever. The only cause of discontent, that we could trace in any quarter, was your refusal of ground to the Methodists, for building a meeting-house. I merely throw out this as a hint. They are, generally speaking, very plausible in the present day; but we know what they did in Oliver Cromwell's time."

"You must excuse me, Sir, for reminding you," said Mr. Myars, a young curate, from a neighbouring parish, "that the Methodists are of much later origin than the period to which you refer."

"You must excuse me in return, my good Sir," retorted Mr. Fitzcarrol, with unblushing effrontery, "if I presume to contradict a gentleman of the learned profession; but the page of history lies open to all, and I appeal to it, in support of what I have advanced."

"Oh! upon my honour, Mr. Myars," said Willy, "there's no use in denying it among friends; for sure, none of us would make a blowing-horn of it against our clergy; but I read as good as twenty times in histories, that Oliver Cromwell was nothing more nor less than a Methodist preacher."

"I cannot understand you, gentlemen," persisted the curate, "unless you give the name of Methodist to all religious enthusiasts; for otherwise, the page of history, instead of witnessing in your favour, must tell point blank against you."

He had unconsciously helped the historian out of the slough, into which his ignorance had plunged him. He looked at him with an air of triumph.

"You have found out my meaning at last, I see; which, I think, was pretty plain from the beginning. However, as the subject seems a tender one, we shall drop it, if you please. You had a very pleasant party at Thorndale's yesterday, Mr. Oglandby?"

"Yes: and a very pleasant drive home," he answered gruffly.

"Come, come, Sir, you must not let your mind dwell upon such a gloomy topic. You will find, on investigation, that it was a mere drunken frolic, or something of that kind; for I pledge my word, that the country never was so quiet as at this time, and it is likely to continue so."

"I thought you were apprehensive of serious disturbances, on account of the tithe system?" said Mr. Ford, agent to Lord Farnmere.

"I hope I may be a false prophet," answered Hector, pompously. "I should be sorry to hurt the feelings of any one present, but I cannot help saying, that I do not wonder at any desperate act being perpetrated by the lower orders, while writhing under such an iniquitous burden."

"Then plague on them," cried Mr. Oglandby, in a passion, "why do they not wreak their vengeance on the guilty? Why shoot me, when Harry Milward is the delinquent? Nay, why not give precedence to Mr. Hector Fitzcarrol himself, who rents the rectorial tithes of seven parishes from my Lord Farnmere? And a very pretty income he has by them."

"Capital!" roared Hector, bursting into a horse

laugh. "That is the best hit you have made these seven years; and I confess you have turned the tables on me completely. So I knock under as to tithes. But, joking apart—to prove to you what is the general opinion of the state of the country, my wife and daughters have teazed me into giving a ball this day se'nnight. They were busy writing the invitations when I left home; and I venture my life, that, let the croakers say what they may, we shall not get a single excuse on the plea of danger. By the bye, Parson," addressing Mr. Milward, "I hope you will not be so strait-laced as to hinder your daughter from joining the other young people in an innocent dance? ——Heh! am I to suppose that silence gives consent?"

"No," said Mr. Milward; "though very much obliged for the invitation."

"Is there any truth in the story which my steward told me this morning, of a very narrow escape which Miss Milward had, last night, of being murdered by a maniac?" inquired Mr. Ford.

"Harry, come over here," said Mr. Oglandby, "and speak loud enough for me to hear you. I want to know what you did with the fellow who so cleverly saved Dora from being taken for an owl by Mr. Fitzcarrol's frolicsome Methodists?"

Mr. Conolly Fitzcarrol lounged to a window at the farthest end of the room.

"I pity my poor father," said he to Mr. Myars, who was the only person in company, apparently inclined to converse with him—"to be bored for ever in this way. No public business can be transacted without him—unfortunately it is the tax must be paid

for a certain rank in society, though I fear I shall never be able to submit to it, when obliged to take his place. At present, thank my stars, I am nobody, and I mean to enjoy my nonentity as long as I can. Were you of the party at Charlesborough, yesterday?"

"No; Sir Ralph Thorndale has never visited me."

"That is very strange, indeed! My father makes it a point to visit every clergyman within twelve miles, which he looks upon as his range. You had a very great loss in not meeting Lord Farnmere, who is one of the nicest persons I ever saw."

"I should have been glad to have an opportunity of speaking to him, about establishing one or two schools on his property," said Mr. Myars. "Do you think it likely that he will give encouragement to such applications?"

"Our conversations have turned upon such very different topics, that it is impossible for me to form an opinion. He speaks very little, at least in the mixed society at Charlesborough, though extremely agreeable in a tete-a-tete. Judging from what I have seen, I should say that he would be entirely influenced by the example of those persons who take the lead, and give the tone to good society."

"And may I ask you, as you seem to understand these things, whether it be the fashion at present, among those people to whom you allude, to interest themselves in the education of their poor tenantry?'

"I am afraid to speak very decidedly on that head, lest I should innocently lead you astray. Perhaps I am rather inclined to think that any thing connected

with that species of religion, which was the fashion for some years in this neighbourhood, is not very likely to meet with encouragement in a certain quarter. Let it go no farther, for I tell you this in strict confidence, that Lady Thorndale always orders the Bibles to be removed from the bed-rooms and dressing-rooms, when visitors of a certain rank are expected."

"That is what I call shameful trimming, if not abominable hypocrisy," said Mr. Myars.

"What can we do?" asked his informer, pathetically. "If we live in the world, we cannot run counter to those who compose it, in the strict sense of the word. But remember, I am not speaking *ex cathedra*, not having been in *town* for upwards of two years; and consequently depending for information upon second-hand authorities, sometimes contradictory, and never satisfactory. I assure you there are times when I feel quite annoyed at the state of indecision in which one is forced to live. Now, to give you one instance out of a hundred, I have been puzzled to a degree, absolutely distressing, for a very long time, about the pronunciation of the name of the poet who wrote "the Task," and other religious poems. You know who I mean. Lady Thorndale pronounces it as if compounded of the animal *Cow* and per; and Mrs. Falconer, and that set, pronounce it as if written *Coo*. I confess I do not know which to follow. The Thorndales, between ourselves, are nobodies in *town*; and Mrs. Falconer, besides being a religious character, never goes beyond Bath, which is completely second-hand. So you can form some idea of the difficulties under which we labour, in this remote place. Indeed

I am so alive to them that I never mention the name, or allude to the poems by the slightest hint."

"I wonder you give yourself any uneasiness about such nonsense," said Mr. Myars. "If you pay so unbounded deference to the opinion of the world, why not chime in with all parties, and let him be *Cow*per or *Coo*per, according to the fancy of the speaker?"

At this somewhat rude speech, Conolly was roused to a sense of the folly he had been unwittingly guilty of, in committing himself so indiscreetly. He had intended confessing himself into a first-rate man of fashion, whereas, in the innocency of his heart, he had acknowledged that he was little more than an amateur. He had, however, this consolation, that his auditor, though a very good man, was a very dull one, and would probably forget his unlucky exposure of himself. Still, his situation was not particularly comfortable, as the stood together in the window; and he hailed with joy the appearance of a carriage coming up the avenue, from which, in a few minutes, stepped Sir Ralph Thorndale, and, if not the wonder-working, at least, the wonder-raising, Lord Viscount Farnmere.

Mr. Oglandby was now as happy as notoriety could make him. He was the undoubted object of general interest; and he felt so good-humoured, and so self-satisfied, as to give very few indications of contempt or impatience, while Mr. Fitzcarrol still kept the lead in conversation, and spoke more loudly and dictatorially than before the arrival of the titled personages.

"Now, Thorndale," said he, "after that you have

heard all the pros and cons, what do you think we should do? We ought to stir a little. Don't you think so?"

"The moment I heard of this very dreadful outrage," said Sir Ralph, "I wrote to Lord Colverston, to consult with him on the propriety of calling on the High Sheriff to convene a meeting of the magistrates and landed proprietors. I have not yet got his answer, and I shall act very much according to his suggestions."

"Oh! a meeting, to be sure; and I suppose a handsome reward offered for information. I only hope that we shall be unanimous, and that nobody will endeavour to run away with the business, and represent the country as in a state of insurrection. I candidly confess that the circumstance has a very ugly look; but I have little doubt that it will be proved either to have been accident, or an attempt at highway robbery—a species of outrage from which no country is exempt at all times." Then turning to Lord Farnmere, who had retreated to the window, lately occupied by the young gentlemen, he continued—"We must not let your Lordship be driven from us by a bug-a-boo story of this kind. We are not half so bad as some people would make us. I wish you would give us a little more of your company, and you would find that the more you knew of us, the more you would like us."

A slight motion of his lordship's lips and eye-lids was the only notice vouchsafed to Hector's address, and Mr. Oglandby gladly took advantage of the momentary pause, occasioned by this pantomimic mode of reply, to gain some attention to himself.

"Ralph," he began, with solemnity, "when the representative of my family, and most of my old friends, left the country, I still remained in it, conceiving it my duty to live upon my property, though you are aware that I had many inducements to make me follow their example. I had hoped to have passed the remainder of my days among you, but the occurrence of last night puts that out of the question. I am forced to become an absentee. So, though it may be necessary for the public good, that you should exert yourself to preserve the peace of the county, yet, so far as I am concerned individually, you need not take much trouble. I shall write by this night's post to my son, to meet me next week in Bath, where I think of settling for the remainder of my life."

"I entreat you, my dear Sir," said Ralph, "to consider the matter very seriously, before you take so decided a step. To change your habits so entirely, at your time of life, might be attended with the worst consequences to your health, besides the loss you would be to your friends, and the country at large."

"Upon my honour, Mr. Oglandby," said Willy Geraghty, half crying, "it is nothing short of a sin, to hear you talk in that way. What would you go away for? Just to let us all be trampled on, and give a crow to them that would be glad to get rid of all the old stock, that they might hold their heads high, and tell the people there is nobody like themselves."

"I had certainly hoped," said Mr. Oglandby, in the same strain, "to have died among you, as I lived among you."

"So you will," cried Hector, "in spite of this little

brush. And instead of going to England to your son, send him an order to come home and protect you, as he ought to do, if you apprehend danger to your person."

"Where was Arthur when you last heard from him?" asked the baronet quickly, anxious to draw off his attention from Hector, whose vulgar familiarity was fast exhausting his patience.

"He was on the wing from Paris," replied the old gentleman; "but somebody told me at your house yesterday, (I suppose it was my Lord Farnmere,) that he had seen him in London a few days ago. My Lord, did you not tell me that you had lately met my son, General Oglandby, in London?"

Lord Farnmere looked bewildered, and, on this occasion, only moved his eye-brows.

"I say," he repeated, in a louder tone, "did not your Lordship say you had met my son, some short time since, in London?"

"*Wat* does he mean?" inquired the Viscount, from Conolly Fitzcarrol, who occupied a chair near him.

"I believe he asks you, my Lord, if you have not lately met General Oglandby in London."

"I have some vague recollection," lisped his Lordship, apparently addressing himself to the fire-place, "of having, somewhere, heard the name, but I have not the honour of being personally"——

The remainder of the speech died away in indistinct murmurs, as he quietly relapsed into his usual sleepy attitude.

Sir Ralph, who knew that Lord Farnmere would receive no more quarter than Hector himself, if the

old gentleman's wrath once broke bounds, again interposed—

"It was Maitland, Sir, who mentioned having seen Arthur. They are old acquaintances, having served together in the Peninsula. But, my dear Sir, I earnestly request you to wait the result of an investigation, before you resolve upon a measure which would be seriously deplored by your friends."

Mr. Oglandby persisted for some time in his plan of expatriation; but at length, overcome by the solicitations of all present, particularly Willy Geraghty, who threatened to sell all and follow him to Bath, he promised to do nothing in a hurry, but to be guided by the discoveries likely to be made, on the projected inquiry.

In the mean time, Conolly Fitzcarrol, who was encouraged by the application to him on the disputed point of General Oglandby, resolved not to lose an opportunity of establishing an acquaintance, which might, hereafter, be advantageous to him. It certainly required some nerve to commence operations, but he screwed his courage to the sticking-place, and after one or two minor coughs, thus began:—

"What a very narrow escape Miss Milward had last night! From the direction which some of the balls took, she must have been inevitably shot, had she been in the carriage at the time."

"Were you speaking to me?" asked the fine man, with petrifying civility.

"I was alluding to the very fortunate escape of Miss Milward," said Conolly, somewhat out of countenance.

"*Wat* is she?" again asked the Viscount, with something of the manner in which a good-natured person addresses a child, who is interested about some babyish distress of its own.

Poor Conolly felt the awkwardness of his situation, without knowing how to extricate himself from it. He was, therefore, constrained to confess that the lady in question was nothing more than an Irish clergyman's daughter—a species of being, which it was evident Lord Farnmere did not know how to class under any head that could ever possibly come within the range of his consideration. There was, however, one redeeming circumstance, which might in some degree, excuse the interest he had unfortunately expressed in her fate, and he gained a little confidence, as he brought it forward.

"She is an uncommonly fine girl. Indeed, I may say uncommonly so. The Duke of Beaudesert, who saw her one morning at Traffield House, could speak of nothing else the whole day. He repeatedly said to me, that she was the loveliest woman he had ever seen. I am sure I am repeating his words literally."

But even the literal rehearsal of his Grace of Beaudesert's opinion, failed to produce any effect. Lord Farnmere still looked as if his language was totally unintelligible; and Conolly, abashed and mortified, was wishing himself at the other end of the room, if his retreat could be managed at all creditably to himself, when he was most unexpectedly extricated from his embarrassment by the approach of Willy Geraghty, who, making a very tolerable bow, took

possession of the seat vacated by Conolly, and bending forward, began without further preface—

"I have the pleasure of introducing myself to your Lordship. My name is Geraghty. I live only a few fields off. Sir Ralph might have showed you the house, as you drove along the road. It's but a poor place enough, with a little bit of land that keeps a horse and a couple of cows: but I once had a pretty estate of my own, only my grandfather sold it, before I was born, to them Fitzcarrols, for a trifle, as all the world can tell your Lordship, as well as myself."

Lord Farnmere's usually half-shut eyes opened, as it were involuntarily, into a broad stare; and, for the first time since his arrival in Ireland, he seemed thoroughly awake.

"Sir Ralph," continued Willy, without waiting for an answer, "was saying this minute, that you were fond of shooting, and as nobody knows where the best sport is to be had, better than myself, I would be a great acquisition to you; and I will give you my company, with all the pleasure in life, any day you want me."

Still his Lordship continued staring, but showed no other symptom of having the full possession of his faculties.

"Maybe he's deaf," thought Willy to himself, and bending forward, he pitched his voice to a louder key:—

"I was well acquainted with your Lordship's uncle, Sir Fenton Leatherbrace. He often dined at our mess, and was most partial to me of all the officers, knowing me to be a good shot. Many's the pleasant day we had together. And now that I see your

Lordship close, upon my honour, I can remark a strong family likeness between you, only you an't near so gross: but that will come naturally, when you are his years; and it is always an improvement, in my mind, when there isn't too much of it. Every thing in reason is my motto."

The assault became now really serious. The barriers behind which Lord Farnmere had entrenched himself, and which were, in general, sufficient to keep off a common enemy, were no protection against the inroad of the barbarian, who had so unexpectedly fixed himself in his neighbourhood. In this extremity, he again looked for succour to the convenient friend, who had come to his assistance on a former occasion; but Conolly had taken his stand behind Mr. Oglandby's chair, and was *practising* his own sickly smile, and vacant look, while the mysterious conduct of Lanty M'Grail was under consideration. He was, therefore, as a last resource, driven to his tooth-pick—a weapon, either offensive or defensive, as it is managed: and having once more closed his eyes, and opened his mouth, he lolled back in his chair, and began using the little instrument most industriously.

Willy took the hint.

"My Lord," said he, rising, "I see that your Lordship is not inclined for conversation; or maybe you have taken offence at something I have said; though, upon my honour, I had no reason for introducing myself to your Lordship, but just to offer my civilities to a stranger, as is the custom between gentlemen in Ireland. However, my Lord, there is no accounting for fancies. One man's meat is another

man's poison; and, my Lord, if it pleases your Lordship to take in bad part any thing I have said, I am, my Lord, willing to give your Lordship satisfaction on the spot."

Willy's red face blushed into positive scarlet, while he spoke; and Lord Farnmere, who, though not overburdened with sense, had sufficient to know, that little credit could accrue to him from an affair of honour with such an antagonist, quickly pocketed his toothpick, and muttered, in a hurry, two or three short sentences, in which the words "obliged," and "respectable gentleman," and "not at all offended," were very distinctly pronounced.

Willy, who was easily appeased, begged that his Lordship would say no more about it, as it was all a mistake; and was going to propose shaking hands, in token of friendship, when luckily Sir Ralph Thorndale called for his carriage, and came to the rescue of his noble guest.

"I am now at your service, Lord Farnmere," said he, coming forward. "We have agreed to hold our meeting as early as possible, that we may have the benefit of your co-operation. It is rather fortunate, since this unpleasant affair has occurred, that you should be here at the time: and, no doubt, you will take an early opportunity of calling the attention of Parliament to the disturbed state of this country."

That the excitement caused by Willy's civilities had not yet subsided, is the only way we have of accounting for the great degree of animation with which Lord Farnmere now moved and spoke.

"I seldom speak in the house," said he, "and ne-

ver on matters connected with Ireland, they are so endless and unintelligible. While the question of emancipation was being agitated, we always voted for it, to get rid of it as soon as possible: and after the relief bill passed, we hoped to hear no more of Ireland, but that you would settle your own affairs among yourselves. You must, therefore excuse me, if I cannot interfere in your affairs. In fact I always leave the house, when the subject is being brought forward, unless particularly requested to stay and vote."

"Ah! Parson dear," said Willy, when the great folk had taken leave, "is it any wonder that poor Ireland is down, if we are left to the mercy of skips like that poor creature? Now, do you think it would be a sin for a man to refuse obeying the laws made by such as he, who confesses that he don't understand any thing about us?"

"The duty of a Christian," answered Mr. Milward, "is to obey the laws of his country, whatever they may be, or by whomsoever made, provided they do not interfere with his duty to God."

"Oh! I knew I was wrong, though I asked the question. And don't think I want to do any thing out of the way; for it is only when taken by surprise, as I was a minute or two ago, (more shame for me,) that I give way to bad thoughts and bad passions. Upon my honour, parson, you may believe me, I have a guard over myself more than you give me credit for. But is it not enough to vex a man outright, to be snuffed at by one, who is more like a mummer, or a stick dressed up in baby-rags, than a peer of the realm? Ah! did you see his rings, and

his pins, and all the band-box flummery he had about him?"

"I will tell you what I did not see," said Mr. Milward: "I did not see you at church last Sunday."

"And who was to blame for that, parson, but the gossoon yourself advised me to take, because nobody else would be bothered with so clumsy a brute? I gave him my boots to clean in the morning, and he must let the young dog run away with the right foot, and after hunting for it for two hours, it was found in the cow-house, in a fine condition, as you may see by the patch on the toe, where the unlucky cur gnawed it."

"Willy," said Mr. Oglandby, who had just bowed out the last of his visitors, "you must stay dinner. Your own bed is, as usual, ready for you. Harry, there is no use in asking you, so I advise you to go home while you have day-light; for though the great Hector blusters about the peaceable inclinations of our neighbours, that hat, and that coat, and that chaise, tell a very different story. Good bye, Harry. Send Dora to see me to-morrow, and in the mean time give her my love."

CHAPTER IX.

After Lanty's freak, Miss Milward's walks, which sometimes extended to a mile from the house, were in family conclave, circumscribed within the narrow limits of the glebe. At any other time, this would have been looked upon as a melancholy privation by the young lady, who enjoyed a scamper through the fields, pretty nearly as much as her attendant, Figaro: but the events of the memorable Wednesday evening had so far diminished her confidence in her numerous friends, (and every person within her range was heretofore accounted a friend,) that on the following Saturday, when the day was as favourable for a long walk, as a hard frost and clear sky could make it, she unrepiningly paced the monotonous round of a very small shrubbery, without feeling any wish to have her bounds enlarged. Still, like every duty-walk, no matter whether pursued in a straight or circular line, it was sufficiently tiresome to wish it well over; and Dora, who had just counted her eighth round, was congratulating herself that four more would lay in a stock of fresh air sufficient for the day, when a violent rustling among the bushes near her, caused a slight sensation of nervousness, as she looked in the direction from which the noise proceeded. It continued for some seconds, without any apparent cause, till at length the red head of Lanty M'Grail appeared, thrust through a mass of lauristinus—his large,

lack-lustre eyes, staring wide, while, in a tone of voice entirely confidential, he called out in a very loud whisper—

"Will I be hung for the sousin' I gave you, Miss Dora, do you think?"

She stopped short, undecided whether to scream for help, run away, or manfully face the enemy. There was altogether an odd medley in her feelings, at the moment, of fear and confidence, of anger and kindliness. She felt a strong inclination to scold, a stronger still to laugh, and at the same time, a sensation bordering upon awe, being convinced that, in some way or other, the urchin before her was connected with a band of murderers. She, however, repressed any outward emotion, and assuming a cold and dignified air, said—

"I am surprised, Mr. Lanty, that you could ever venture to speak to me, after your very improper conduct!"

"I knew it wouldn't hurt you, Miss Dora. I often had mud sticking all over me, for ever so long; and sorrah a bit of hurt it done me; let alone how it comes off asy, with the laste taste of water."

"That is no excuse, Sir: I was always kind to you; and I thought you would be the last person in the world to treat me with disrespect."

"It was the clanest mud I could get, Miss Dora, I wouldn't take it out of the dirty strame where the horses drinks, so I fished it out of the ditch, where my grandmother gathers the water-grass for the mistress—and sure, sign's on it, you haven't a speck about you now, and that shows how clane it was."

"Nonsense, boy! It is very little matter to me,

whether it was clean or dirty. You knew that it was a most horrible thing to do, and you knew how I hated every thing of the kind."

"What could I do, Miss Dora? Wasn't I schaming in my own mind, ever since Monday morning how I could do it in the most plasing way to yourself?"

"Why, boy, I believe you are a complete fool!—How could any such thing be pleasing to me? Answer me this plain, simple question, at once—why did you do it at all?"

"Ah! sure, wasn't it to keep them from shooting you, Miss Dora? And an't you better plased to be alive in your own scrubbery, nor to be dead out of the world, or with a ball in your left shoulder, like Will Travers?"

"Then you knew of the intended attack upon my uncle?"

"I knew nothing about any thing, Miss Dora. But, sure yourself knows that the coach was shot, and Will Travers was shot; and what was to hinder yourself of being shot, if you was in it? And now, Miss, will you bear malice again me, ever, if I done my endavour to keep you alive?"

"I bear you no malice, Lanty; but I am afraid that you are a very bad boy, and I cannot have confidence in you again. If you had such a regard for me as you pretend, why did you not tell me the whole truth honestly, that I might have put my uncle on his guard?"

"I couldn't know what to tell, Miss Dora. I only hard a whimper that if you went into the coach, you would never come out of it alive, so I done my best

to stop you. All sorts is again me, now, Miss Dora," he added, mournfully. "I darn't go near my grandmother since that, and I'm afeard of my life for any of the neighbours to see me; and if you don't make up with me, what'll I do at-all, at-all, Miss?"

"I may make up with you again," said she, endeavouring to preserve her cold manner, which was rapidly thawing, as he appealed to her kindness, "but it is on condition that you tell me how you became acquainted with the plan for murdering Mr. Oglandby."

"You often bid me not tell lies, Miss; and now, you want me. Every Sunday you give me no pace, abusing the life out of me, if I say one word that displases you; and if I was to tell a lie now, may be you'd be outrageous, and you putting me up to it; and why would I tell any thing, Miss, that I promised not?"

Dora was silent, and Lanty continued in a more melancholy strain—

"The Poliss is looking after me to hang me, and I wouldn't like to be hung, Miss Dora, it's so trying to a body. I'm crawling about under the ditches all day long; and I've no place to sleep in at nights, only with Mr Costigan's big dog, when the house is shut up. I wouldn't mind it a straw, if it was summer, but I'm fairly famished and perished with hardship and unasiness."

"My poor fellow!" cried Dora, forgetting all her wrongs at the recital of his distress. "Why do you not go home at once to your grandmother? They shall never hang you, Lanty—nobody could do that

but me, and I will never, never say one word to injure you."

"My grandmother is mad, Miss, for 'fraid I'd turn informer: she's worse upon me nor all put together. Then the boys will murder me, that's sure, if they knew I was in it, and the other neighbours, every one of them threatens to leave me for dead, for the splashing I gave you. Would you think it, Miss, but Ileen Garvey, that was ever friendly to me, she goes about with the smoothing-iron in her pocket, to brain me if she ever sets her two eyes on me."

"Come home this minute with me, Lanty, and you shall have a bed under the kitchen stairs; and nobody shall attempt to injure you while you are under my father's protection."

"Oh! sorrah foot will I go, Miss Dora, where Mrs. Burrowes could give me a glaum—she'd do it, Miss, if the master and mistress, and yourself, was to intercede for me, on your bare knees. It's no matter about a bed; for Lion has a beautiful house of his own, with plenty of warm straw, and he likes to have me with him, seeing he's lonely at night. Lion knows me well, Miss Dora, and so does all the dogs in the country. I dont say," he added very sheepishly, and turning away his head, "that if you had a could praty or two about you, that maybe I'd be glad to get them."

"Oh! Lanty, my poor boy!" exclaimed Dora, quite overcome, "is it possible that you have eaten nothing to-day?"

"Them ravenish pigs at Mr. Costigan's, Miss, gabbles up every thing is thrun them, when they gets more than ought to satisfy them twist over, if they

had any discretion; and they are so dirty brutes, that they spoil the little lavings they have. You wouldn't bleeve, Miss Dora, what a well-natured dog Lion is. He hid a bone, with a good dale on it, under the straw, for me, last night, never thinking, the poor thing, that it was Friday; so I was fain to throw it away unknownst, not caring to vex him."

"Stay where you are, Lanty. I shall not be five minutes absent. I am going to get you some bread and cold meat. Do not be afraid, my poor boy, that I could ever betray you," seeing that he showed symptoms of uneasiness. "I will never tell that I have seen you, till you give me permission; and you must meet me here every morning, so long as you are afraid to go home."

"Stop a minute, Miss Dora; don't mind throubling the mate. Saturday is all as one as Friday; and I wouldn't ate it if I was starving alive. Stop again, Miss; they may be flattering you, to get all out of you about me, and you know you won't tell lies; so hould your tongue when they question you, and then what can they know? That's the way I often put yourself to an amplush, when you was bitter hard to find out a thing, and that I was loath to tell a lie, seeing how you hated it. Oh! look at her!" he cried, in a voice of alarm, and again disappeared in the thicket of ever-greens.

The object of such consternation was Mrs. Falconer, who was just commencing her constitutional walk.

"Lie quiet," whispered Dora, scarcely less frightened than himself. "Do not stir till I call you, when you may be sure the coast is clear;" and then run-

ning in the opposite direction to that which her aunt was taking, was out of sight in a moment.

Mrs. Falconer, unconscious of her near neighbourhood to the outlawed Lanty, who, in his best days, was no favourite with her, quietly passed his hiding-place; and instead of continuing her walk round the shrubbery, crossed into a path, which ended with a stile leading to the high road. Her annual visit to the glebe was drawing to a close, and she took advantage of the fine day to call at the houses of some poor people, who, from being the objects of her casual charity, had insensibly grown into regular pensioners. Mrs. Falconer was one of those religious characters who do more harm than good with the best intentions, or we should rather say, inclinations. She was always in extremes—always arguing—always splitting hairs, and striving about words to no profit. With her, a matter of taste immediately became a matter of conscience, and she could never cordially give the right hand of fellowship to any person whose conscience could not be squeezed into the mould adapted to her own. The Established Church she had long denounced as Babylon, and every Dissenting congregation, of which she had become a member in regular rotation, had the same mysterious term applied to them, on leaving their communion; till, at length, she fixed among the Separatists, with whom she had quietly rested for some years. Latterly, however, it would appear that she meditated a step or two backwards; for she did not outrageously profane "the Lord's-day," had more than hinted at a recognition of her sister's claim to Christianity, and expressed to Mr. Milward a strong anxiety as to the

state of her old uncle Oglandby. But, to nip in the bud any hopes which these concessions might give rise to, she was warm as ever in her opposition to Sunday schools, and all religious societies; and when Dora was not present, advocated the cause of the theatre, cards, and other amusements, which had long since been given up by the Milwards. Still, there was an insensible approximation to many of their sentiments, and a gradual softening of asperity of manner and expression upon subjects connected with religion, which made her society far less unpleasant to her family than it had been in times past; and the attachment between her and Mrs. Milward, which had certainly suffered much diminution during the time of her highest flights, was rapidly recovering its lost ground in both their affections.

But to return to our narrative. Dora watched her aunt's route with feverish impatience, till she was fairly out of reach of hearing and seeing; and then hastily dismissing Lanty, laden with provisions for the next twenty-four hours, with orders to be on the watch for her in the same place every morning, resumed her perambulation—having deducted one round in consideration of the extra race to and from the pantry.

In the mean time, Mrs. Falconer had nearly reached the stile, when the clamour of three or four tongues in loud altercation, arrested her progress; and she stopped behind the hedge until the angry disputants should pass by.

"Well, gentlemen," said Johnny Monroe, "I see I can do no good; so as I am a trifle tired, I will sit down a bit here, and you need not stop for me. But,

Captain, it would be a christianable turn if you did not quit them till you settle between them; for isn't it a shame for two Protestants to be fighting and squabbling about what might be no variance at all, if they were only agreeable in their own minds."

"I am willing to leave it to Captain Geraghty, or any other gentleman in the parish, and so I offered a hundred times over," said one of the combatants; "only that man is so contrary, that nothing will satisfy him, but having his own way in every thing."

"I offered the same," cried the other; "and it's you won't give in to reason as long as there is a straw in the world to dispute about."

"Captain," said the first speaker, "to show you who is the disturber, ask him if I didn't say content, when he offered to leave it to a toss-up; and he turned on his heel, and cried, no bargain."

"It's as big a lie as ever came out of any man's mouth," exclaimed the accused, "that I ever offered to toss-up. I leave them doings to ball-players and gamblers, and such like. I offered to draw lots—that's what I did; and it was you drew back, and not me."

This plump contradiction roused all the remaining wrath of the tosser-up, which was vented in the counter accusation of lying, and doubly and trebly lying; besides the additional charges of being a swaddler, and a class-leader, and a hypocrite, and a rogue; while the diviner by lots was not a whit behind, but repaid every opprobrious epithet with interest; and not content with simply abusing his antagonist, reviled his father and brother, and sundry relatives, living and dead.

"Shame, shame!" cried Monroe, when he could obtain a hearing. "Shame upon two Protestant men with Bibles in their houses—and double shame upon you, George Carothers, with all the good talk you have by times. I hope you'll humble yourself, and just try what is in your heart, before you meet your class to-morrow morning, and run off your tongue, what I am afraid never goes an inch deeper. Captain Geraghty, for the sake of decency, don't let them disparage themselves for the lucre of such a trifle. Make George show you the bit of bog-oak, and then bid them be ashamed of themselves."

"Upon my honour, you speak like a man of sense and discretion, and religion, too," said Willy. "To be sure, having been in the army is greatly in a man's favour, every way. Come along, you two, and don't let me hear a word from either of you, but what is proper for a gentleman to listen to. Come along, I say. Upon my honour, you ought to be ashamed of yourselves, and I wonder I did not see that before."

CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Falconer waited till Willy had carried off his noisy companions, and then joined Monroe on the road, requesting him to accompany her in her excursion over the bog; as, like Dora, she began to have an indistinct fear of the people, which every appearance of disturbance served to increase. She was, also, glad to have an opportunity of conversing alone with Monroe, whose conversion to her own way of thinking, she had long at heart: and though hitherto unsuccessful, had never quite despaired of ultimate success. He was one of those very few persons for whom she entertained an involuntary respect, even in her most fantastic moods. She could never find it in her heart to unchristianize him entirely, and when driven to the utmost bound of forbearance, generally contented herself by calling him an anomaly—a word which sounded very harshly in his ears, but the meaning of which he was determined never to inquire, lest, if it was as bad as he suspected, he might be tempted to indulge uncharitable feelings, and perhaps *think* of a name for her, with as bad a signification.

"There still continues to be a good deal of religious profession, I see," began the lady, "in this parish; and I suppose you are very happy when you see an instance of such tenderness of conscience, as was evidenced by that man, in his horror of tossing up to decide a disputed point?"

"A tender conscience, Ma'am, I believe to be a good thing, so far as it goes; for I have read but an indifferent character of one that is seared with a hot iron, to take all the feeling out of it."

"Then you approve of the religion of your scrupulous friend?"

"I seldom like, Ma'am, to draw down one man or another for a pattern to find fault to. But afraid you might lie under a mistake, I will tell you at once, that I do not approve of the religion of George Carothers, either by what he says, or what he does."

"Yet, are not such the persons of whom Mr. Milward speaks in terms of high approbation?"

"Why, Ma'am, I can't tell what the gentleman may say in his good nature—only if he does—why—he returns good for evil—that's all. But there is a little mistake in your mind, Ma'am, about the people. Mr. Milward has a good right to think well and speak well of some of his flock, for they give heed to his teaching; and if he thinks himself right, sure, he must think them right, that takes his instruction. But George Carothers, and such as he, never listen but to find fault, and to call him an advocate for sin, because he won't compliment poor creatures like us, by telling us how good we are, or how good we may be; and what I can't understand is, that they go to church at all, when they speak worse of it, and of its ministers, than the Romans themselves."

"I cannot quarrel with them on that account," said Mrs. Falconer, "as my sentiments, so far, perfectly accord with theirs."

"So you often gave me to understand, Ma'am."

"And I cannot comprehend," she continued, "how

you, who sometimes speak.....rather.....in a..... sensible way on those subjects, and who have, more than once, acknowledged that there are *imperfections* in the Establishment, can still continue a member of a church, which, by your own confession, is nothing less than Babylon."

"With submission to you, Ma'am, you take me up too short. I remember giving in to some of your objections more than I afterwards saw was right, when I considered the matter according to the sense of the thing, and not only by its words. However, I don't go back of some things I said. You accused us of having Popery among us; and I said, and still say, that there is more of it with us, than is pleasing to me; and if I could find a church where there was nothing, I would change—and where the spirit of Popery was not just as plain, if not plainer, I would join myself to it joyfully, and think it a sin to stop in any other."

"Excuse me, Mr. Monroe, if I say there appears to me to be a little hypocrisy in what you say. If you were in earnest, you could not be content to remain a member of a religious body—I cannot call it *the* church, or *a* church—in which God is worshipped not after a scriptural rule, but according to the traditions and commandments of men."

"Bad enough, Ma'am, if what you say be true!—but what am I to do? Would you have me turn Independent or Baptist?"

"Oh! no, no: neither one or other," she replied, in high good humour. "You may as well stay where you are; for human inventions and traditions have as prominent a place among them, without the excuse

of antiquity, and obedience to authority, and the like untempered mortar, with which you try to hide the cracks and flaws in your tottering edifice."

"And what is to become of me, Ma'am? You don't think well of me staying with the Church-of-England people, nor of joining others that I look upon as Christians, though I may think they have a little leaning to Popery by times; and you won't let me in among yourselves—so, an't I in a fine way under your directions?"

"*The Church,*" said Mrs. Falconer, gravely, "never objects to receive a member, on his making a scriptural profession of faith, and never separates from his communion, while he continues to walk orderly."

"All fair, Ma'am—but still you have no place for me, let my profession be ever so scriptural, or my walk ever so orderly; for, at the best, I could only be a weak brother, and you have no provision for such."

"I do not understand you, Mr. Monroe."

"Well, Ma'am—just to mention one thing—if I did'nt misunderstand you, when you first opened your mind to me, about seven years ago, I believe you said, that you would not receive me unless I acknowledged that salutation by kissing, in your assemblies, was an ordinance that could not be passed over, without direct disobedience to an apostolic command. I could not see it in that light. I thought it over and over again, and I am as far from viewing it in that way as ever. If it was not made an article of faith, (as I may call it,) I might give in to it for the sake of peace: I might look upon it as a matter of no con-

sequence whatever, whether it was done or undone; just as I stand, or kneel, or sit, according as others do, in my own place of worship, without ever thinking that those changes of posture have any thing to do with belief in Christ. I might be a little dashed at first, thinking it useless and child-like; but I would not dispute about it. But if you would make me say, that I looked upon it as binding on my conscience, it would be forcing me to tell a lie to God, and I could not bring my mind to that."

"You need not be afraid of being pressed against your own conviction, Mr. Monroe. We are not so anxious to make proselytes—we leave that to the Pharisees of all times, and all religions. But will you favour me with your comment on that text, 'Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.'"

"I take it, Ma'am, as plain as it is written—that our salutations to each other should be holy, as well as all our other actions. But I do not find it ordered to be done only at one particular time; and as to the manner of doing it, I should think that may be left to the custom of the country in which we live. It is not the way in this place for men to kiss each other; and I think I am fulfilling the apostle's directions, when I give my hand in charity to a brother, just as much as if I kept up to the letter."

"Yes: and in the same spirit you may do away with every precept in the Scripture, by finding them inconvenient to practice, on account of the customs of the people among whom we live."

"My meaning will not go so far, Ma'am. I would not bate an inch of what was plainly a duty, to meet the fancies of any body. But are not you obliged to

put a wide meaning on another text, that speaks as home to the point as the one you keep literally to? You won't deny that widows are *supposed*, at least, to wash the saints' feet: and yet, what Christian woman's conscience is defiled at not doing that? I beg your pardon, Ma'am, but *you* are a widow, and do you put it in practice to them you acknowledge disciples?"

"No: the Church has not decided on its expediency."

"And to my mind very sensibly. I am sure you judge rightly, that it is fulfilled in the spirit, when you do any needful work of charity to a brother who wants it. I would not bring forward what the Lord himself says, that 'ye also ought to wash one another's feet,' as you might tell me, he only meant that for the twelve apostles, and so you would get out of the puzzle easily. But, Ma'am, I would not quarrel with you, if, out of a scruple of conscience, you put it in practice, so you did not ask me to see it with your eyes. I hear the Pope does it; and if he never did worse, I would not cast it in his teeth, as one bit of harm."

"The Pope is a very convenient personage to screen yourselves behind, when you are convicted of adding to the word of God, by your traditions. You must be hard pushed for arguments, when you are obliged to travel to Rome for them."

"Don't be displeased with me, Ma'am, for that's the very way you often answer me, when you travel farther for arguments than I can follow you. However, supposing that the question of salutation could be settled to both our satisfaction, there is another

thing to keep me from your communion. You would not let me join in prayer with any other set of professing Christians, but yourselves; and that is what I call a Galatian hedge to confine my Christian liberty. I am bound to love all them that love the Lord Jesus; and where two or three such are gathered together in his name, I would not show my love by turning my back upon them. You may tell me that they are not disciples, only because you don't think so; but if I have good reason for judging the contrary, or if I only think I have, it would be sin in me to treat them with that contempt. You see, Ma'am, I am speaking as a weak brother; and though weakness is but a poor thing for a man to confess of himself, yet it is what one may expect to meet with, even in the Church. We have all our weaknesses, Ma'am, and doubtful disputations will never give us strength."

"Really, Mr. Monroe, the disputation has been all on your side. I have long since stated to you the truth; and if you do not receive it on its own authority, I have not so high an opinion of myself, as to suppose that my arguments could add any thing to it. I merely wished to hear your reasons for continuing a member of a religious society, confessedly defective in discipline, not to argue you into a proselyte to my opinions."

"To excuse myself, Ma'am, for staying where I am, I must first tell the fault I have to you, that would hinder me going over to you, for you won't allow me any half-way house to take up my lodging in, even if I was so inclined, which, in the honest truth, I am not—and for this reason, that of all the dissenters that ever came across me, (I mean those that look for salva-

tion through the merits of the Lord Jesus,) though I love many of them in my heart, and wish them good luck, in the name of our common Lord, yet, supposing I agreed with them more than I do, they would put a yoke upon me, that would gall me the more, because I expected liberty. My mind would be more fettered with them than it is where I am: so, judging as I do, if I was to go to them, it would be (saving your presence, Ma'am) 'out of the frying-pan into the fire.' "

"We agree perfectly on that point, Mr. Monroe; and though you may not be inclined to give me the credit of it, yet, I believe, I was the first person who led you to view these matters in their true light."

"Having told you some weaknesses of my own, Ma'am," he continued, "which would make you shut your doors against me, if I asked entrance, I would tell you some other objections that would hinder me craving admittance, if it would not offend you."

"Not in the least. You will only bear in mind, that I am not entering into a religious discussion with you. I am merely listening to a declaration of your creed, without meaning to controvert it, whatever it may be."

"I am free to confess, Ma'am, that I often heard you speak beautifully, so that my heart went with every word you said; and bating the misgiving you have, that every body is telling lies but yourself, and that you can't believe a man, if he was as honest as day-light, I could well bear with you as I do with others, who sometimes won't bear with me. But I have considered you closely, and I see few Bible marks about you of belonging to God, excepting only talk, and but little even of that, which, after all, is

not here nor there. Indeed you seem to me to be always trying to look as if you never thought about him, and to make believe that you are worse than you are; for I cannot think you have a hard heart, seeing what you do for the distressed and the poor. And now, Ma'am, dear, why will you let the world think so, by making your amusement out of them, whose religion you think is only a holy short-cut to hell? I have seen you scorn at your sister for her profession, when you ought to have shed tears of pity over her, if she was so far gone towards destruction as you thought. I have heard you call, in an in-earnest kind of joke, that unartful young creature, Miss Dora, a dear little hypocrite, when my blood has run cold to think of the heavy woes denounced against her, if she be such, by the Lord himself. Oh! Ma'am, does the religion of the Redeemer teach us to make game of the unbelief of others; or is it meant to harden our hearts against those loving feelings to our own, put into our breasts by Him who made us; so that we can laugh at them, who are near and dear to us, because their portion is to lie down in sorrow at the last?"

"How do you know my feelings on those subjects, Mr. Monroe?"

"Ah! Ma'am, sure that is my complaint against you, that I can't know them; or that I must guess you have not any at all. All I know about you is, that you can laugh *with* them of your family, who are openly profane; and you can laugh *at* them who call upon God, through the one Mediator between God and man—and all this, because you are a religious character. Now supposing religion did not teach us

to be pitiful, I would expect you, from the feelings of nature, to have 'great heaviness, and continual sorrow of heart,' on account of the ignorance of your family, that is, if you had any affection for them, or if your religion did not quench it entirely. Oh! Ma'am, dear, take a thought, and look that way in on yourself. Your own blood-relations there up at the glebe, are not worse than the Jews, yet he who might well have been tired out with their wickedness and unbelief, wept over them, and never, that I can read, showed any thing of a harsh spirit towards them."

"You certainly have but a poor opinion of me and of my religion, Mr. Monroe. But I am still to learn how you are so intimately acquainted with my hard-hearted and pitiless feelings."

"I judge, Ma'am, from what you have said to me, yourself, at different times, and from the books you gave me to read, to open my mind; and believe me, Ma'am, I could not take the good that was in them, from the bitter spirit in which they were written. They seem to delight in hating, and are full of scorns and scoffs at those who think their souls worth looking after: and then they deal so in calling names, such as Pharisee and hypocrite, that a Christian man would stammer at putting on another, when he cannot read the heart. The first thing, Ma'am, that ever gave me a turn against your religion, was when you fixed both one and other of them names on Mr. Milward; for, said I to myself, does she positively know that he devours widows' houses; or that he puts a burden on any one, that he will not touch himself; or that he does his works, only to be seen of men; or

that he makes any one two-fold more the child of hell than himself; or that he takes the key of knowledge from the people; or that he brags of what God has made him, to give an excuse for reflecting on poor publicans? I could not shut my eyes to the truth that he had none of these marks and tokens about him; so I thought you wrong to speak so unadvisedly, and that made me jealous to trust you in other things, without tracking you closely through the Bible, where, with submission to you, Ma'am, you often took such round-about ways, that it was hard to keep up with you."

"I am not aware that I ever spoke directly of Mr. Milward, in such terms as you use."

"Please you, Ma'am, you did; for I brought you to the point, and asked you if he was one of them you would call a hypocrite, and you told me plainly he was; and though you did not say it all out of myself, you gave me to understand, that I was sweeping and garnishing my own house for the lodging of them that would be out-of-the-way company for a man who trusts in Him, who will shortly bruise Satan under his feet. I was not much alarmed at that, for I thought to myself again, what can the gentlewoman know about me, to judge me after this fashion? She finds no fault to my confession, and she has no reason for thinking I ever say one thing, and mean another. But there was one word, Ma'am, sounded frightfuller to me than all the words you ever said, if they were all put together—and that was Babylon. You had a way of saying it, as if it ought to put a gag in my mouth at once; and I was faint-hearted enough to be frightened, without knowing why. 'Will you stay in Babylon?'

says you. 'Am I in Babylon?' thinks I: 'If so, it's no place for me.' But after lying many a long night, awake, and thinking it over and over again, it struck me that it might be a-piece with your Pharisees and hypocrites. So I turned in earnest to the Bible, to see what it said, and I found that Babylon was always a persecutor of God's people, and I found that when her end comes, there will be found in her the blood of prophets, and saints, and of *all* that were slain upon the earth; and that satisfied me that if it is a church, I am not in it, and so I couldn't come out of it; and it taught me to make allowance for some of your hard speeches, and not to be frightened by a dream."

"You must excuse me being the innocent cause of giving you so much uneasiness," said Mrs. Falconer; "though since you have discovered so very easy a way of solving every difficulty, it is not likely that your uneasiness will ever continue very long; at least, so far as respects what you may hear from me. But if you have concluded your gratuitous objections to my opinions and practice, perhaps you will oblige me by saying what you can, in defence of your own, which, you are aware, appear to me as objectionable, as a total discordance from Scripture can make them."

"I am apt to be puzzled, Ma'am, when a thing is thrown upon me all of a heap; so, would it please you to think of one objection at a time, if it is not too much trouble to your mind; and where you put it to me fairly, I will try to give you as good an answer as I can."

"My mind will not be much wearied in searching for objections," said the lady, laughing: "they are

so numerous, that the only difficulty will be to make a selection. However, you shall have the first that presents itself to my recollection at the moment, and which, you are aware, is brought forward triumphantly against you by Dissenters. Do you think your indiscriminate admission to the communion perfectly scriptural?"

"May I ask you, Ma'am, would you hinder any one from partaking of that ordinance, who made a public profession of his faith in Christ?"

"I see you are reduced to quibbling, Mr. Monroe, which proves the weakness of your cause; but be candid, and confess that you know many in this parish, who you do not esteem believers, and who are, nevertheless, regular communicants at Christmas, and other high days."

"There is too much truth in what you say, Ma'am, as to my evil thoughts of others—I can't help demurring of some, that they are not sound at heart. I beg your pardon, Ma'am, but I have often a strong misgiving about yourself, though I try to put the temptation of judging far from me; but I would be sorry to have to act upon my own jealousies; and if I had the management of it all to myself, I would not take it upon me to put you, Ma'am, or any other person away, when the meaning of the ordinance was explained to you, and that you took all the responsibility on yourself, only because I might have my doubts of what was passing in your mind."

"You are describing your own very amiable feelings, Mr. Monroe, but you are not defending your church with scriptural arguments."

"All I have to say, Ma'am, is that we have more

Scripture to back us in our forbearance, than you and others have to excuse the catechizing of your neighbours' hearts. The apostle Paul says, '*Let a man examine himself.*' There is not one word of a cross examination by others. The confession with the mouth ought to satisfy man—the believing in the heart can be known only by God, who searches it, and knows it."

"I assure you I am no advocate for cross examination, and you are not fair in objecting this to me. But to keep close to the point—are there not numberless instances among you, where you have not even the profession of the lips?"

"We are on surer grounds there, Ma'am, than you are; for the communion service, which, I believe, you can't abide, puts the words into a man's mouth, so that there can be no doubt about it. And if the worst that ever lived was to join me only in the one prayer before the consecration of the elements, I would try and smother all my hard thoughts, and leave them to the judgment of Him, who alone judgeth righteously."

"If you speak the real sentiments of your church, I must say it requires more credulity from its members than is consistent with the proportion of common sense, which might reasonably be expected among any given number of persons, who were not absolute fools."

"The very thing, Ma'am, I have heard brought against yourselves; for easy as you think we are satisfied, they say you are content with just nothing at all."

"Well, Mr. Monroe, we cannot help what *they* say,

whoever *they* may be. You are wandering from the point, to which I shall bring you back in spite of all your doublings. We shall suppose, for the sake of argument, that your good-natured short-sightedness in the case of some *tolerably deficient* characters, may be all very right and very proper; but what have you to say of your civility to notorious offenders?—I mean such as you, *good people,* shake your heads at; yet such often force their way, and take their place among you, I suppose, to the great scandal of the *good, better,* and *best* in your congregations."

"It does surely scandalize the congregation, when a thing of the kind happens; and I am free to say plainly, that I wish our church discipline was strictly enforced. There is no doubt, it is greatly to be desired, and we are in fault as to that. But if it was not managed better than I see it with others, I would rather let things remain as they are. Your discipline is for ever splitting you, on account of an odd word, now and then. Why, Ma'am, if report says true, you are a member of no church at this present minute, being shut out of the one your mind would lead you to continue in, because you happened to say that it was not lawful for a Christian to lay up any thing for himself or his family. Maybe I think you take a narrow view of the matter, but I would not deliver you over unto Satan, for only having respect to the very letter of our Lord's commands."

"As usual, Mr. Monroe, when hard pressed, you attempt to throw dust in my eyes, by objecting something that I either do, or do not hold."

"Don't you see, Ma'am, how I only want to make it clear to you, that I am better off where I am, think-

ing as I do, with the Scripture for my guide, than with any other body of professing Christians who would not bear with me. You fault our discipline—

"Pardon me—not your discipline alone: I object to every thing connected with you as a church, so called."

"But we are at that one point which yourself brought up, so let us see about it.—Well, Ma'am, you fault our discipline: I agree it is not attended to as it ought; but where am I to find better? Not with you, for your's is unscripturally strict. You would shut out one half the Bible from me, as completely as Mr. O'Floggin keeps the whole from his flock. I could not think over it, for myself, among you; and if I did, I must keep my mind close covered, or I should be unchurched in a minute. Then, as for the discipline of others, I could not tolerate it, by no means. I once knew a woman who would not be received a member of a dissenting congregation, till she had to undergo a trial of a year and a half, though her walk never gave offence to them within or without, and her confession of faith was as clear the first day as it was the last. Now, Ma'am, I say boldly that such an apprenticeship has no warrant at all from Scripture."

"One would suppose I was advocating the cause of Dissenters," replied Mrs. Falconer, "by your constant recurrence to their practices, as an excuse for your own, when you must know that I am more opposed to them than you are. One very strong objection to you and other *religious* members of the establishment is, your inconsistent latitudinarianism."

"Oh! Ma'am, dear," said Monroe, stopping short,

and lifting up both his hands, "is it right to use them words? If I can't help bearing with people, and loving them, for their love to my Master, am I to have such terrible names put on me, that a gentlewoman would be cautious of speaking, let alone one professing godliness?"

"You are needlessly alarmed, Mr. Monroe. The word which I inadvertently used, has not a very terrible meaning. All I intended to express by it, was, that you make too many allowances—that you are what *you* would call, too charitable."

"There's a power of words, no doubt," said John, "that a man like me can't be expected to have at his finger's ends; but when I hear any that are very cramp, and out-of-the-way entirely, I am apt to think they have a very deep meaning."

"I request your serious attention to what I am going to say," said the lady, "as it may be the last opportunity I shall have of conversing with you; and you need not suspect that I have a deeper meaning than what I plainly express. You have approved of some of my sentiments, at the same time protesting against my practice. I can also say, that I have heard with pleasure, many most excellent things on the subject of religion from you; so much so, that I should have no hesitation in acknowledging you as a brother, if I were not acquainted with your inconsistent conduct. Your sayings and doings are in direct opposition, Mr. Monroe. You profess to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are, in fact, a worshipper of the ten commandments."

"Is it me, Ma'am!!"

"Yourself, Mr. Monroe. Do you not, every Sun-

day, kneel down while they are reading, and beg of God to incline your heart to keep each particular law?"

"Why, Ma'am, if I thought you were in earnest, I might as well hold my tongue; for when things contrary to sense and reason, and the noon-day truth, are believed by a lady, a man had better just say, 'well, leave it there,' for what else can a man say? But I see you are laughing at me, Ma'am. Sure, yourself well knows that I don't worship them, no more than any other part of the church service?"

"But do you not regard the law as a rule of life?"

"I don't well know what to answer, Ma'am, for fear you may be laying a trap for me, that I could not so easily get out of, not seeing the drift of your words, all at once. But I will say this without favour or affection, one way or other, that I would be sorry to break one of the commandments, wilfully and knowingly, because 'sin is the transgression of the law;' and you will not deny, Ma'am, that there is not one word of allowance for sin, in either the New or Old Testament, that would make a man careless about it. Now, Ma'am, to make my meaning as plain as I can. I believe murder is a sin, and you won't think the worse of me, if I pray earnestly to God to keep me from it, knowing that by nature my 'feet are swift to shed blood.' Then, for the rest, I would not transgress them in thought, word, or deed, if I could; and if that is making them a rule of life, why, Ma'am, I am guilty before you, and I can't help it."

"It is just as I suspected. You are seeking justification by the works of the law."

"No, Ma'am; I deny that. It is my joy, and my thanksgiving, that the sinner's justification is not put upon *that* which is weak through the flesh, but that he is justified and reputed righteous before God, by faith only in Christ, who is not a lawgiver, but a forgiver of sins, and a Saviour. I would not bate an inch of my Christian liberty, which I am as jealous over as yourself can be; and I would fain have every body fling away every yoke of bondage, but the one that is easy, which the Lord invites his people to take on them: but I would not use this my liberty, as a cloak for licentiousness. I don't know if it will please you ever to understand, Ma'am, what I mean; but the short and long of it is this.—As to justification, I look upon the commandments as nothing but 'weak and beggarly elements'—weak and beggarly for that purpose; and so I would not let them come near me, by no means, if they professed to help what they could only hinder. But, Ma'am, though they can't help a man out of a scrape, they can give very good advice; and as long as they cry out against murder, and robbery, and wickedness of all kinds, I'll say that they are doing what is right, and that I would be doing what is wrong, if I did not listen to them, though I don't worship them, nor never will, the longest day I have to live. This is my true judgment, Ma'am, and if after hearing it, you judge me still to be a liar, and refuse me the right hand of fellowship on account of idolatry, I can't help it.—That's all."

"Supposing you to be in earnest as to your profession, still I dare not countenance your disorderly

walk, having a positive command to withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly."

"Oh! then, Ma'am, if that's all your quarrel with me, it's easy made up; for I can call the whole parish to witness, that I neither meddle nor make with the people, farther than if they ask an advice, as you did now, Ma'am, when you put me to answer for my belief. And I can prove, too, how there is not a man of my age and feebleness works harder at his calling; and that the never a strange bit of bread goes into my mouth, except an odd cup of tea with Mrs. Burrowes, or another genteel neighbour, which, yourself won't say is unlawful. So Ma'am, I am no disorderly Thessalonian, and".....

A piercing shriek from Mrs. Falconer stopped Johnny's harangue, and threw him into such a tremor, that a few seconds elapsed before he was quite aware of the cause of her alarm; which was nothing less than Lanty M'Grail, who had suddenly bounded over the ditch behind them, and twining his long arms round the lady, cried in a voice of terror—

"Save me, save me, Miss! I'm cotch by them Polis, that tracked me with Lion; and I'll be hung out of the face, and destroyed and transported, if you don't banish them, and scould them away."

"Let me go, my good boy, I beseech of you. Let me go, I say, you ..... that is, my good lad—I will give you a shilling if you stand at a little distance. I will give you half-a-crown if ..... Mr. Monroe, for pity's sake, persuade him to let me go, for he is pulling me into the ditch."

Monroe did not trust to his powers of persuasion

to make Lanty loose his hold, but attacked him with the united force of his two arms, which, though they had lost much of their original strength, were, on the present occasion, more than a match for the stripling, whose fright had completely unnerved him.

"Lanty, dear," said he, when he had extricated the lady from his grasp, "it's all a folly, what you are doing. Behave like a man, and like a good child, and no harm will come to you."

"If Miss Dora was here," cried the terrified boy, still struggling hard, "I'd die asy, for she wouldn't let them put a hand on me.—What will I do! what will I do! to be murdered in this a-way! Oh! Johnny—Oh! Mr. Monroe, tell that one," pointing to Mrs. Falconer, "to frighten them away. There's not a man in the country would rise his head before her, if she was only to be wicked, as they say she can be."

"Oh! be quiet, dear—be quiet now, I tell you," said Monroe, hugging him tight in his arms. "You will only make people think bad of you, if you try to run away. Give yourself up quietly to Linny Ward, and be mannerly and sensible, and tell the truth, Lanty, dear, that it was your own foolishness about the cap, made you do what you ought, no doubt, to be well thrashed for: but, as for hanging you, the king himself, no, nor the first lord in the land, could'nt do it, for only wilfulness. So quiet now—quiet, child—you can't swim against the stream, I tell you."

All hope of flight was now, indeed, vain. The three police men had separated, and taken possession of every path, by which escape was possible, and

were coming towards him at a quick pace. Lanty, who had eyed them, while at a distance, with quivering agitation, gradually lost all appearance of fear or anxiety on their near approach; and quietly commenced his usual low hissing whistle, with which he was accustomed to beguile the time, while sitting on the wall near his grandmother's cabin. The first of his pursuers which came up, was Lion, who immediately jumped on him, and began licking his face, and showing other demonstrations of joy at their meeting. A flash of feeling suddenly lighted up Lanty's countenance, as he indignantly pushed the animal from him.

"None of your palaver," said he, "you ill-natured pig. You sarved me a fine turn, didn't you, when I trusted to your friendship? Down, you brute—I wouldn't believe a word out of your mouth, no more nor I would from a horse. Down, I say, you dirty thing. Maybe its wanting to bite me you are."

"Now, is there any wit or harm in that poor innocent's mind?" said Monroe to the constable, who had by this time seized upon Lanty, "when he expects the dumb animal to understand him? Treat him gently, Linny, till he's cleared of being any thing but over headstrong, which isn't the worst crime that men of your calling have to look after. And Lanty, dear, I'll speak for you—I'll have to say that you are unmannerly, and ill-conditioned, and a very bad boy; but still my word will quit you of what is laid to your charge. I suppose, Ma'am," he continued to Mrs. Falconer, as the police walked off with their prisoner, "that you would like to go back the shortest way,

after your little fright? And if it is pleasing to you, I won't leave you till I put you inside the door, seeing that you are not used to things that we never heed, being so common."

The offer of his escort was gratefully accepted, and Mrs. Falconer, by means of a short cut, had soon the satisfaction to find herself safely lodged in the Glebe-house; while Monroe, instead of returning home, took the road to the police-barracks, to see how matters stood with Lanty.

CHAPTER XI.

Great discoveries were expected from the capture of Lanty; for, with the exception of Monroe, who saw sufficient cause for his offence in the squabble at the Sunday School, there was not an individual, from the highest to the lowest, who did not suspect that there was more of kindness than malice in his impertinence to Miss Milward: and on the following Monday, many of the neighbouring magistrates and gentry attended his examination at Traffield-house, while a number of police constables were in requisition, to act with promptness, according to his testimony, against the yet unknown offenders. But nothing could be elicited from Lanty, though questioned and cross-questioned with great ingenuity. He was not dogged, nor sulky, nor rude; but he had an air of stupid indifference, which never could be roused to any thing like feeling, when attacked in turn by the stately admonition of Lord Colverston, or the friendly exhortation of Mr. Milward, or the raw-head-and-bloody-bones threats of Mr. Fitzcarrol, or the sly wheedling of Willy Geraghty. The little sense he ever had, as Monroe afterwards declared, was frightened out of him, by the hunting of the police, and the fine words of the gentlemen, or how could he otherwise forget all the instruction he had got, and the beautiful answers he often gave Miss Dora? Thus he had never heard of heaven or hell,

or if he had, not a bit of differ did he ever hear there was between them. He did not know what taking an oath meant, but he would do it if Mr. Milward bid him, and he would say any thing the gentlemen ordered. He had never told a lie, barring an odd pinch by times, or a clout to a fellow that would not let him alone. He thought that killing a pig was all as one as killing a man; and the sorrah bit of harm there was in murder, seeing as how himself was often murdered over and over again, and no matter about it. He did not love any body, or hate any body, and the never a care he cared, if all the world was shot, he supposed there would be plenty of people still—what would hinder them? During his long examination, he never for an instant lost his self-possession, if such it could be called, or evidenced the slightest interest in any of the questions, till accused of ingratitude to Miss Milward, when his whole frame became agitated, and he stuttered out, with much eagerness of voice and manner, "I wouldn't hurt the ground she walks on, and she knows that well, herself." Being thus thrown off his guard by his better feelings, he became embarrassed, and was evidently at a loss to account for his conduct towards her. But his perplexity did not continue long. Johnny Monroe had unwittingly supplied him with an excuse, by reading him a long lecture, while in the police-barrack, for allowing the poor lucre of a bit of a leather cap, to drive him to such wickedness; and though the excuse was none of the most amiable, it was the best, if not the only one, to help him out of his present dilemma. Accordingly, after a few very natural grimaces, and pulling all of his fingers till the joints cracked, and

protruding his left shoulder, so as very nearly to form with it a screen for his face, as if ashamed to confess the truth, he at length accused her of keeping back his right: and betrayed so childish an anxiety, and so much pettish displeasure at the withholding of the cap, that the majority of his examiners came round to Monroe's opinion; and Mr. Milward, having, in his daughter's name, declined prosecuting for the assault, he was, after sundry advisings, and warnings and threatenings, turned over to his grandmother, who promised to have a sharp eye and a heavy hand on him, for the future.

At the same time, a number of the Carragh boys, who had been taken on suspicion, were liberated, having clearly proved an *alibi*; and the warrant against Connel St. Leger (whose general character was of the worst description, and who was more than suspected of being implicated in other outrages) was withdrawn, on the representation of Terence Mulvaney, a great favourite with Lord Colverston's steward, who offered to make oath, that he and his comrade Delahunt were employed by him, on that evening, to watch a kiln-cast of oats.

Notwithstanding the large reward which was offered immediately, and the unceasing exertions of all the authorities in the county, nothing transpired that could lead to detection. On the contrary, a report began to be whispered among the peasantry, and which was not discouraged by Fitzcarrol, and the party of which he wished to be considered the organ, that the old gentleman having exceeded a little after dinner, had taken a tree for a robber, and so, fired his pistols at random; and that to save his credit, his

connections were willing to make a little noise, and offer a reward, which they knew could never be claimed.

Improbable as the story was, it nevertheless answered the purpose for which it was first put in circulation—that of irritating the minds of the lower orders against those who took an active part in trying to preserve the peace of the country. Lord Colverston, however, persisted in calling a county meeting, which was held about ten days after Lanty's examination, and which, as might be expected, did more harm than good, by the clashing of party feelings and interests. The Braymores and Fitzcarrols came prepared to oppose any resolution proposed by the Traffields and Oglandby's; and their various connections and dependents ranged themselves on either side, determined to fight, tooth and nail, in defence of their leaders. Hector had a fine field for display, being the only orator the opposition could furnish; and he luxuriated in the opportunity thus afforded him, of hearing himself hold forth, by speaking twice as long and six times as loud as Lord Colverston, and by replying in the same lengthy and uproarious strain to the other gentlemen, who ventured to see the matter in a different point of view. Sir Ralph Thorndale made two or three very neat, and very short speeches, all about nothing: endeavouring as much as possible to keep on neutral ground, which was, in fact, the only ground on which he could ever find firm footing. It was his wish to be considered the umpire between the two conflicting parties, on the present occasion, but it was evident that he never attained a higher place in the estimation of either, than that of an un-

welcome go-between, whose interference was resented by both. Still he shuffled, and shuffled, and seconded a resolution, and then seconded the amendment, and then explained, and then recanted his explanation: but his unfailing resource, when hard pressed, was to apply for his opinion to Lord Farnmere, who, seated in a chair next to the Lord of the soil, seemed perfectly unconscious of what was transacting around him, unless when startled by a violent thump on the table from Hector, or directly addressed by the soft, silky voice of the Baronet.

The relief obtained by an appeal to his Lordship, was but momentary. Whatever reply he vouchsafed was inaudible beyond the chair, and immediately after the exertion of pretending to speak, he resumed the air and attitude, which would have exactly suited a personification of Grey's Prophetic Maid, when she pathetically concludes every reply to her troublesome visitor, with—

> Now my weary lips I close,
> Leave me, leave me to repose.

Hector, who began to be very impatient at the Baronet's monopoly of public attention, took advantage of the silence occasioned by Lord Farnmere's last speech, and was on his legs for the fourth time, when his noisy harangue was quickly drowned in the still louder roar of Willy Geraghty, vociferating, "order, order," who then, without lowering his key, proceeded to address the chair, undismayed by the yells of the mob, who resented the interruption of their favourite.

"My Lord, isn't this a beautiful way to be doing business, letting all our time be taken up with speeches, to no end, that I defy your Lordship, or any

other gentleman of sense or understanding, to make head or tail of? If you don't stop that man's mouth, he'll bother away till he goes through every word in the biggest spelling-book that ever was printed; and when that stock is out, he'll coin new English sooner than give his tongue a holiday. It's the way of all his family from time immemorial—that is, of his father and himself, for I never heard that the pedigree could count higher. Can't you at once divide the house, as they do in Parliament, and that will tongue-tie him *complate*? Concentrate your forces, my Lord, and we'll beat them hollow—we'll beat them to the back-bone—we'll beat them to their heart's content. Bid all the honest men wheel to the right of your Lordship, and, my word for it, the remainder will have elbow-room, and to spare, on the left, which is the place best becomes them."

The *honest men* waited no further orders, but pushed and scolded, and fought their way, to the gathering place appointed by Willy; and contrived, as the mass rolled onward, to carry Sir Ralph with them; while poor Lord Farnmere, in the perturbation of his spirits, caused by the sudden movement, said, "aye," three times very audibly, when it was shrewdly suspected, that if he intended to say any thing, it was "no." As Willy promised, Lord Colverston carried his resolutions by a very respectable majority, and the meeting broke up amidst frightful confusion within and without doors. Fortunately, the mob were so delighted with Hector's speeches, that they insisted upon chairing him, which gave opportunity to the two noblemen, and their friends, to drive off without experiencing any ill usage at their hands,

except hootings, and hisses, and curses in abundance, and a few handfuls of mud aimed at their carriages.

The other obnoxious characters of a lower grade, made their retreat as well as they could, and stole out of the town in the most unostentatious manner.

Although the same reasons for avoiding notoriety could not be pleaded by Father Duff, yet he seemed particularly anxious to escape observation. During his short walk from the court-house to the inn, he refused seven invitations to dinner, on the plea of being engaged to Ned Costigan, and having called for his horse in a great hurry, pursued his journey alone.

This solitary propensity was very unusual with him, as he was of a remarkably social disposition, and had often been known to wait hours together for the chance of a companion, rather than ride a few minutes by himself. But the occurrences of the day had vexed and grieved him, and he disliked the idea of talking them over again till his mind was a little calmed. Mr Fitzcarrol had magnanimously renewed his offer of tranquillizing the country, with his assistance, and that of his coadjutor, O'Floggin, if allowed to take their own way; and poor Father Duff could see no possible way of arriving at so devoutly-to-be-wished-for a consummation, with such assistants. In truth, his day was over. In former times, he had been able to restrain his flock within some bounds, being constantly on the watch to nip in the bud the first appearance of a bad spirit in his parish; and with such success, that he often boasted of it with pride, when contrasting it with others of a lawless character. But he was remiss in his care of the youthful part of his charge, at least so it ap-

peared to his Bishop, by permitting them to receive instruction unauthorised by the Church of Rome. After repeated reprimands for inefficiency in this particular, which, certainly, had not much effect, as neither parents, nor children could ever be convinced that he was in earnest in his opposition to the schools, and therefore, persisted in never minding him, the tone of his Superior gradually softened, and on the plea of his advanced age and growing infirmities, though still an active, hale man, he was kindly accommodated with an assistant to ease him of part of his arduous labours. From the hour that Mr. O'Floggin entered upon his coadjutorship, the affairs of the parish assumed another aspect, and in the course of five years, Rathedmond could vie, in moral degradation, with the most neglected part of Ireland. In the mean time, Father Duff had been insensibly losing the authority, which, for years, he had maintained with an even, though, sometimes an high hand, The people no longer looked to him for advice, or followed it when gratuitously given; and his eyes were, at last, unwillingly opened to the humiliating truth, that he had sunk into a mere cypher. At no time had this consideration pressed upon him more painfully, than when Hector made his pacific proposition, and offered to take him into partnership with O'Floggin. He felt it to be an insidious committal of him, as a favourer of their principles, to which his own were decidedly opposed: yet such was the state of bondage, to which the tyranny of Rome had subjected his free-born spirit, that he dared not even to express his sentiments, much less to act upon the conviction of his better judgment. Then, on the other

side, coarse things had been said, and intemperate assertions made, which, as usual, went to prove too much. Sweeping censures involved the innocent with the guilty, and he writhed under the injustice that would consign to an untimely grave all the good he had done in his days of comparative freedom, and throw a load of other men's sins upon his shoulders. He had, hitherto, stood well with Protestants of even the deepest orange and blue, who were in general, convinced of the uprightness of his intentions, and believed him to be more than half a Protestant at heart; but on this trying day, he thought he saw a decided change in their manner towards him. Every cold look, and stiff bow, which, after all, might not have been colder or stiffer than the company-manners of some people always call forth, were registered by him, as so many symptoms of his falling popularity in that quarter; and it seemed to him as if all the world was fast bidding him good night.

This heart-sinking was in some measure relieved by the returning kindness of Mrs. Costigan, whose long-tried friendship he feared was irrecoverably lost by his unfortunate attempts at condolence, as nearly three weeks had elapsed before she showed any symptoms of reconciliation. But within the last few days he had received half a hundred kind messages from her, with an invitation to dinner on that day; and as he drew near to Kiladarne, his spirits revived from the conviction, that, at least in that house, he was sure of a hearty welcome.

Nor was he disappointed. Both master and mistress received him with the heartiest of hearty welcomes; and though the latter did not directly allude to the

circumstances of their last meeting, she was evidently anxious to atone for her petulance on that occasion, by even more than usual kindness of manner and expression. After a very few minutes, Father Duff felt again quite at home, and before dinner made its appearance, had so far recovered his spirits, as to give a short abstract of the occurrences of the meeting with tolerable composure.

There is no doubt but he looked forward with a little apprehension to the probable turn the conversation might take before the evening was over. Mrs. Costigan had still the same look of care, but as yet she had not uttered a complaint, and seemed anxious to give her whole mind to entertaining her guest.

"Ah! Mr. Duff, dear," said she, during a pause in carving, "try a bit of this pickled beef, and put by them chops, that have all the nourishment burnt out of them, by that one in the kitchen."

"I believe I'll take your advice," replied Mr Duff, determined to be agreeable in every possible way, "for though the mutton couldn't be better, it can't be denied but it saw a little too much of the gridiron."

"It goes to my heart," said she, "to put good meat into the hands of the like of Christian Rooney, only to spoil it. I had a sore loss of Ileen Garvey, Mr. Duff, for she is the only girl in the country, who could tell why they got a pair of hands on their body."

"She was a well-handed girl, indeed; and I was sorry to hear she left you, as I thought she answered you to your satisfaction."

"I did all I could for her, Mr. Duff, but she would

take no warning. I gave her as much liberty as a girl ought to have, in moderation, and it would not content her. She stole out of the house after we were all gone to bed, and went to the dance at Bryan Killion's that night, when, as sure as I am sitting here, a scheme of murder brought most of them together. However, that is neither here nor there, for I could not suspect her of having any knowledge of such doings. I was just beside myself when I found out what she had done, and how her name was reflected on, so that I expected her to be dragged to jail before my eyes. And, to give her her due, she humbled herself, and asked pardon, and promised to be more cautious for the future. But when I insisted that she should give up company-keeping with that unfortunate St. Leger, who, if he has not blood upon his head, is cruelly belied, she grew stiff and hardened. She cried enough to break the heart of any two of her slender make, but she would not forswear his company, or promise to make strange with him, even for a while. So I said in a hurry, that she must either give me up, or him; and she would not come into my terms, and I was forced to let her go. I believe she is sorry, as well as myself, for the parting; but badly as I miss her, I would not take her back, if she encouraged that fellow about the place: and I think you will say that I am not wrong, Mr. Duff?"

"Not at all, indeed. Nobody could fault you for setting your face against idlers and night-walkers."

"Remember," she added, "that I lay nothing to poor Ileen's charge, but wilfulness about her liking for that bad graft, who she thinks more of than all the rest of the world put together. She will come to

sorrow, I know, by marrying him; and if so, I will never turn my back on her—no, no; I can't forget what she did for me, when the weight was hanging over my heart, that crushed it, and bruised all the sense of feeling it ever had, out of it."

"Oh, oh!" groaned Father Duff, inwardly; "we are in the thick of it now; and how I will ever get out of it, is beyond my poor skill to reckon."

But Mrs. Costigan did not pursue the subject; on the contrary, she seemed anxious to get rid of it at once, by abruptly asking some question about the meeting, which, although it had been answered a minute before, her guest most readily undertook to answer over again; and that so diffusely and parenthetically, that the cloth was removed before he had exhausted his stock of information upon one very inconsiderable particular, hinting at the close, that much of an interesting nature remained yet to be told. This manœuvre generally had the effect of engaging her attention to a story of even lesser promise; but though, in the course of his narrative, she, at intervals pronounced a "dear me!" or, "think of that!" and other little ejaculations, which give a fillip to the spirits of a story-teller, it was evident, from the aukward places at which they came in, as well as from the incessant fidgetty change of posture, that she was totally uninterested in the relation, and contrary to her usual custom, soon left the room, throwing the blame of her ill-manners upon Christian Rooney, who, "if not well watched, might do all kinds of mischief, without once troubling her head whether it was bad or good."

A full hour and a half elapsed before she again

made her appearance; and then, instead of taking her seat at the fire, she began to arrange the tea equipage on one end of the table, while the gentlemen, who had not yet finished their punch, occupied the other. Her husband, who was a great politician, still continued his calculations upon the probable consequences of Lord Colverston's application to government; and Father Duff, as he raised, from time to time, the glass to his lips, watched her from under his eyes, to conform himself, as much as possible, to her present humour, whatever that might be. The scrutiny was, however, any thing but satisfactory. There was a restlessness in her eye, and an indecision in her motions, together with, now and then, a sudden, though short fit of abstraction, which made her so unlike her former self, even in her most eccentric moods, that it was impossible to decide upon any determinate mood of action, and he awaited, in no slight degree of trepidation, the result of this unusual demeanour.

At length every arrangement as to the tea-table was completed, and Mrs. Costigan took her seat in the proper place for doing the honours of it, giving a little, short, quick cough, her usual prelude to a speech. Father Duff was determined to pre-occupy the ground.

"I was telling Ned, just now," he began, "what a pity it is to see money and station thrown away upon that poor creature of a lord from England. All the time he was muttering, and winking, and twisting his legs, without being able to get out a word that a Christian could understand, that rhyme of yours was running in my head, about.....you know—poh! what is come over me, that I can't remember it? But it

means, that if a man has not some worth in him, he might as well be a fellow made up of leather, and .....something else, with a hard name."

"Little I care what he is made of, Mr. Duff," said she, rising from the table, and drawing her chair close to her guest. "It would be well for some of us that we were never made at all, if the half of what that book says be true"—suddenly drawing a thick octavo from under her shawl, and placing it on the table before him.

"Ah! woman dear," exclaimed the priest, "how, in the name of all the world, did you come by a Protestant Bible?"

"I bought it—but no matter for that. How it came makes no difference one way or another. What I want now, is for you to tell me what you think of it?"

"Oh! sure what could I think of it, only what I ought to think of it? It is a good book—nobody will deny that; and provided a man don't take a bad meaning out of it, but just read on quietly a bit now and then, without wanting to understand more than the church thinks proper for the laity, it would never do him the least harm. So don't be afraid of me; we are old friends, who wouldn't quarrel for a trifle. If you have a fancy for reading it, keep your own secret, and I will never tell."

"Answer me this, Mr. Duff:—did you ever read it yourself?"

"Aye, did I; both in Latin and English: and mighty fine reading it is, particularly in Latin."

"And answer me another question:—How can you

be so cheerful as you always are, after reading such a book?"

"Blessings on you! Is it you that makes a wonder of that? you that would read all the books in print, if they came in your way, and only be the more ready for a laugh or a joke, the minute after. Ah! you little know all I had to read in my day, and reading that was dull enough to make a man stupid at the time: but when it was over, what was to hinder me enjoying myself like another?"

"You have not come at my meaning yet, Mr. Duff," she answered, impatiently: "but maybe you will understand me, when I ask you what is sin?"

"Any fool could answer that," said Mr. Duff. "Why, don't yourself know, that sin is wickedness, and the worst of wickedness? what I hope you and I, and the like of us, will wash our hands of entirely."

"That's beautifully spoken," said Ned; "for bad as we are, and to my mind we are bad enough, yet it would be a poor story to tell if we had any of that among us."

"Mr. Duff, I may as well tell you the truth," said Mrs. Costigan, "that that book has put thoughts in my mind, which will not let me have an easy minute. I cannot now sit down quietly to grieve over my own trouble, but some of its words will take hold of me, and every thing else is banished from my memory. I don't know how it is with me, and I want you to tell me why it should make me selfish and uneasy. To my knowledge, I never did harm to a living being, nor never committed a sin, since the hour I was born; and yet I cannot turn the second leaf, open it

where I will but I feel frightened at myself, as if I was the worst that the blessed air ever blew upon, and I dread often to raise my eyes, for fear of seeing sin stare me in the face."

"That only shows you have a tender conscience, Mrs. Costigan, and you ought to be happy to have a tender conscience."

"Then, every thing that happens, let it be as bad as it may, is nothing, after all, but a receipt for happiness! That is strange doctrine, Mr. Duff; and though I would be as willing as most people to be guided by what you say, yet I am in the dark to see why I ought to be happy, because a whole book is written all against myself, accusing me, and condemning me, and telling me that there is no hope for me, in this world or the next."

"You see, Mrs. Costigan," said Mr. Duff, after puzzling for a few minutes, "the Bible is a book to advise us for our good; and every one that advises us for our good, must say sharp things to us, and threaten what not, to make us behave ourselves: just as good parents have to manage with their children. They have to scold them, and call them imps, and blackguards, and vagabonds; and they must fly into a passion, and threaten to cut them in pieces, and leave them a mark to carry with them to their graves; and, after all, they have no meaning, but to frighten them into good manners. Now, that is the way with what you have been reading. It is to keep you close to your duty, and nothing else, you may depend upon it."

"And there's not a woman from this to America, wants less to be checked about her duty than her-

self," said Ned. "So, Sally, dear, turn a deaf ear to any thing that would blame you on that score."

"There's no use in talking to me after such a fashion, Ned. If that book is what it says it is, it cannot deal in foolery and game-making; and if there is meaning in words, it speaks home to my heart, that I am a sinner, and what am I to answer when I cannot deny it?"

"As for that matter," said Mr. Duff, "we are all sinners; but you know we are to look to the mercy of God, and do the best we can for our own souls."

"I never did any thing but what was good for my soul, Mr. Duff, as you can vouch for me. Indeed, how could I do otherwise? For, not to praise myself, I can say with a safe conscience, that in any goodness I ever did, I never thought of God at all, it came so natural and so easy to me. Yet that is no comfort to me now; for if sin is in me, how am I to get rid of it? And if, after all, I want mercy, what am I to do more to deserve it than I have been doing all my life? It is a folly to tell me to be one bit better than I am, for that is impossible. Since these thoughts came into my mind, I tried what I could do in that way, and the more I try, the more my uneasiness increases, instead of going off."

"It all comes, Mrs. Costigan, from your not looking at the difference between sin. There is mortal sin, which is enough to make a man tremble in his skin; and there is venial sin, which is a trifle. The word venial may show you how little matter it is; and that is all that you and I, and other good Christians have to do with."

"I never once thought of that," said Mrs. Costigan,

eagerly catching at any thing to relieve her distress. "But it is so long since I said the catechism, that I forget my seven deadly sins, as if I never heard their names. Put me in mind of them, Mr. Duff, that I may be sure I am safe from them."

"Isn't it odd," said he, after thinking a while, "how things will run out of a man's memory? I once had them so pat, that I could count them over like a school-boy; but now I can't for the life of me recollect the first. If I could catch that, the rest would follow in a minute. However, no matter. If you ask old Alice, or the schoolmaster, or any of the Carmelites, who teach the catechism in the chapel of a Sunday, they will tell you all about them."

"No need to go out of this room, for I remember them myself, as well as if I was put through the questions yesterday," said Ned, quite proud of himself, at knowing more than the Priest. "This is what the master says—'How many are the chief mortal sins, commonly called capital and deadly sins?' says he—and then comes the answer—'Seven—pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth" Am I right in my count, Mr. Duff?"

"Every one of them right, Ned, and in their proper place. You have them so glib, by remembering the first word. I could have taken you up the minute you said 'pride,' only you got on so quick, there was no overtaking you."

"The Bible bears hard enough upon me," said Mrs. Costigan, "but you and the catechism have sealed my doom at once. It requires no witchcraft to understand, that if them be deadly sins, I must be a

deadly sinner, and I am much obliged to them who found out that for me."

"Sally, dear! Sally, dear!" said her husband, "what's come over you this evening? Haven't you trouble enough already, without hunting after sin to harass and fret you to no end?"

"I don't believe one word of that catechism, when I consider the matter coolly," said Mrs. Costigan, addressing the Priest, in a manner any thing but cool. "It is only a trick, as you say, to frighten children; for every one of them things that it calls deadly sins, are just pieces of myself that come into the world with me, and won't part me till death lays his hand upon me and them.—Sure I never denied that I was proud—you often told me so, and made a joke of it, which showed how little you thought of it. Then, as for anger—why I am angry this minute with you, and angry with myself, and angry with Him who made my lot: and I can't help it, and I don't want to help it, for I have a right to be angry.—And who could blame me, if I was envious at seeing others, with their child upon their knee, while my own that I had the best right to, is lying in Rathedmond? Now, supposing all that to be deadly sin, what is to become of the whole world that never stops committing it? What is to become of myself, if I must live and die in it; and I see nothing else before me?"

"Dont talk of dying in mortal sin, my dear woman—don't let such a thought ever come into your head. If you should have the misfortune, at any time, to fall into it, do as the catechism desires you,

when it says—Ned, what does it say we must do when we fall into mortal sin?"

"We must repent sincerely, and go to confession as soon as possible."

"At that rate, I would tire out all the priests in Ireland, for there is not a minute but I ought to be confessing: and for repentance, how could any one be sorry, morning, noon and night, for what comes upon them so naturally, and so often, that I defy the best hand at arithmetic to keep the count? So, drop the catechism, Mr. Duff, for it don't help you, nor would I give a straw for one word it says, after such nonsense."

"Oh! Mr. Duff, dear," said Ned, "lay your orders on her to quit reading that book entirely. What business have such as we to meddle with what don't belong to us? She has plenty of fine books to rise her spirits, and you ought to tell her to keep to them, like a sensible woman, as she was ever accounted."

"Ned says what has sense upon the face of it, and I must say, you are ill advised to take to such reading, without the consent of your clergy. If your heart was set upon it, I would have let you follow your fancy, as I know you would take your own way, no matter who said against it, once you got a thing into your head: but I would have warned you, what St. Peter says, and says of that very book, that it is hard to be understood, and that the unlearned will only read it to their own destruction. You may take my word that St. Peter says all that, for I read it myself, and heard it repeated a hundred times."

"I can shew you the very place, myself," said Mrs.

Costigan. "I soon found it out, as I did plenty, to startle a stouter heart than mine. It was this very thing that made me ask you for instruction. I thought that as religion was your business, and that you got all the learning to make you master of it, that I could be in no danger with you for my guide."

"Then, take my advice, Mrs. Costigan, and put it all out of your head, at once: and when you are not thinking about it, just tell me what troubles you, and I will give you an answer to your satisfaction, as you will say yourself when you try me."

"No time like the present, Mr. Duff: and it will be a charity for you to set my mind at ease, and let it go back to fret about what it ought, and not be taken up all with myself. I told you before, that I can't lay my finger upon a sin I did, or want to do, being naturally inclined to peace, and not given to any bad vice; yet there is a temptation come over me, ever since I took to reading the Testament, to be scared at myself, and to draw my own picture after the pattern of the foolishest creature that walks the earth; and what can be the reason of that?"

"Something frightened you, you may be sure; and if you would only point out to me what it was, I might put you in a way of getting back your courage again. But if you keep hammering away about sin, and nothing else, what can I say to you more than I have said?"

"I marked this place for you," said she, opening the book. "It don't stand to reason that it means all it says, and sometimes I think I am a fool to mind it at-all; but there is an odd misgiving about me, as

if it were true. My sense says it is not, and then my heart contradicts my sense, so that between them both, my brain is distracted. Read on, Mr. Duff, from that place, beginning, 'There is none righteous, no, not one;' and see what it says about cursing and bitterness, and every awful thing, till it bids all the world stop their mouths, because they are guilty before God."

Mr. Duff was a long time reading the verses under consideration, and much longer meditating over them, before he gave his opinion.

"God help the world," he said at last, "for there's no doubt it's in a bad way; and what can a man do to mend it, if the people won't take good advice?"

"Never mind the world, Mr. Duff," said she, with one of her most impatient gesticulations. "Bad people will be bad, if you preached yourself black in the face. Leave them to themselves; only tell us, do them words touch me, or any other Christian that never injured another?"

"It is not easy to be as good as one ought," answered the Priest thoughtfully, after another pause. "It takes a deal of penance and mortification to drive sin out of a man."

"Troth Mr. Duff, if it is there at-all, neither penance nor mortification will make it move a quarter of an inch. I tried both one and other in my time, and they left me just where they found me. When I was a girl, young and innocent, my mother, who was careful of our manners, made a complaint of me to the Priest, two or three times, about some foolishness, and penance was put on me. The last time, (I be-

lieve it was for going with others to a fortune-teller,) I had prayers to say till the string of my beads wore out, with fair telling them: and I was angry all the time; and I was angry after it was over, at the bare thought of the plague it was. Now, if anger be such a deadly sin, why did not that sore penance banish it, instead of raising it more and more?—Then, as for mortification!—If I don't mortify myself, all Lent, and every fast-day, I wonder at it!—Me! that can't bear the smell of fish, from a trout to a salt-herring; and that would not think it worth my while to throw a cloth on the table, if there was not a bit of flesh-meat to come after it; yet, not even in sickness would I transgress. And, after all, if I am still bad, I am not the value of a penny the better for my fasting, nor could I ever see the least change in myself, except being glad that the fast was over."

"It's your own fault, Sally, dear," said her husband, "if that gives you uneasiness; for how often did I offer to speak to Mr. Duff, and give him any compensation in reason, for leave for you to eat meat, when I saw you wished for it."

"Ned, honey," she replied, "don't mind me. It never gave me any uneasiness to talk about, and I would not fret you for a thing of the kind. But, Mr. Duff, I see you do not like answering my question, so let us take our tea in quietness and friendship. I must go on reading for myself, for I cannot stop where I am: and who knows, when my mind is composed to search deeper, but I may find the cure as well as the disease."

"Compose your mind, by all means," said the

Priest. "There is no cure for trouble of any kind surer than to put it out of the head at once."

"That is not the way, Mr. Duff. You never knew me to sit down contented, without sifting to the bottom, whatever took hold of my thoughts; and I will leave no stone unturned till I am satisfied. There are them I know who only found peace and joy, where I met all that was discouraging; and if I cannot come at their secret by myself, I must only ask them to make me as wise as themselves."

Ah! Mrs. Costigan," said the Priest, mournfully, "take care of yourself, and don't let obstinacy get the better of you so far, as to turn your back, in the end, upon the true faith. I guess who you mean to make your complaint to; and though I allow her to be a woman in a hundred, and that if ever any one out of the Holy Roman Catholic Church could be saved, it would be herself; still it is a dangerous thing to walk on the ledge of a precipice, even if the wisest and the best should be the leader. Besides, is it a thing I could expect from you, to go and expose me to them, that think little enough of me, as it is? Would it be a kindly turn, after so many years of friendship between us, to go and tell the world that I was not able to give a word of advice to one of my own flock?"

"Never fear, Mr. Duff, that your name will be reflected on by my means. It may be that I never will open my mind to mortal, out of this room, but if I can't help it, with the load that is about my heart, why, what can be blamed but my own foolishness? And here is my hand for it, Mr. Duff, dear, that let

my thoughts of myself be what they may, I will never think other than what is friendly and loving of you; and I humbly ask your pardon for my wilfulness, the other day, when I said what I ought to be ashamed of. Whatever fixes itself in my mind, you will be the first to hear of it, and I will be led by you entirely, if I can see the way you are going."

"Where a woman like you got all the sense you have, Sally," said her husband, "is beyant a man of my understanding; for it is just a pleasure to hear you speak, even when I don't see your drift. If every thing went contrary to me from morning to night, I ought to be happy, thinking of my luck to light upon such a wife; and I am not ashamed to say it to your face, Sally. But now, that Mr. Duff has settled your little misdemeanor to your satisfaction, let us talk of something that is instructing, while we have a man of his sort in our company. Fill out the tea, dear, and look cheerful. Now, do you ralely think, Mr. Duff that Sir Ralph has it in his eye to set up for the county, in opposition to young Mr. Traffield?"

It was some time before Mr. Duff could collect his thoughts, so as to take a very lively part in the conversation; but Ned plied him hard with questions, and Mrs. Costigan exerted herself into something like her former agreeability, till by degrees his spirits revived, and the remainder of the evening passed so cheerfully, that he forgot the annoyances of the day, and, on his departure, promised with a hearty good will, to repeat his visit on an early opportunity.

CHAPTER XII.

LANTY's fear of the "boys," and of his grandmother, quickly subsided after the day when he baffled all the wise heads in the county. Whatever he knew, or however he had gained his information, he had given the most decisive evidence that he was trustworthy, and had no inclination to turn informer; and when that apprehension was removed from the minds of the people, they rather admired him for his cleverness, in saving the life of his benefactress, without betraying the Oglandby plot; and began to entertain for him that mysterious kind of respect, bordering on veneration, which the half-witted, or idiots, often obtain from the lower orders in Ireland. On his return home, he quickly settled down into his old habits; resumed his seat on the tottering wall, from which he had a view of whatever was transacting in Mr. Costigan's yard; made up the quarrel with Lion; and, on the next Sunday, appeared in his own corner in the Sunday school, where he behaved with so much propriety, that he was rewarded with a new lesson, in words of four letters, and carried off the long-promised cap in triumph.

"Now, Lanty," said Miss Milward, as she gave it to him, "I expect that you will be a good boy in future—I really am your friend, but the continuance of my friendship must depend on your own good conduct."

"Miss Dora," said he in a whisper, "if they take to shooting the gentlemen entirely, don't be anxious about your turn, Miss. All the neighbours says they won't allow a dog to bark at you; and supposing even that you was killed on the spot, they'd make an uproar, Miss, would frighten the world."

"I am very much obliged to them, Lanty; but I hope there may be no occasion for any uproar on my account. Go home quietly, like a good boy, and instead of idling about the whole week, spend an hour or two every day spelling over your lesson for next Sunday."

"Miss Dora," he called out, as she turned away, "is that the coat you had on, Miss, the time—— the time, you know, when you wouldn't go into the coach?"

"No; why do you ask?"

"That coat, Miss, is what keeps all their mouths open again me still. Ileen Garvey says I ought to be skivered for it, and the people's never tired of going to her for news about it. She says it will never do a ha'porth of good, after the splashing it got; when I know, Miss, if you'd only try beetling with it, it would answer. When my grandmother has any thing to wash, she brings it down to the river, and pelts at it with the beetle on a big stone, till it's all as one as new. Will you try it with that coat, Miss Dora?"

"It would be quite useless, I assure you, Lanty, to attempt any thing of the kind. But it is no matter about it now, provided that you never play so mischievous a prank again."

"If it isn't mended, Miss, I won't have pace, so

I won't. Mrs. Burrowes herself speaks crueller nor Ileen herself; and what will I do with her, at all, Miss, when she says, she will never die till she has the vally of that coat out of my bones?"

"You are quite mistaken: Mrs. Burrowes forgives you, and I forgive you, and nobody has a right to be displeased with you but me. If you are teased about it any more, tell them plainly that it is no business of theirs, and that it is very ..... no, no, I do not mean that—I mean that you should say ..... nothing—remember, not one word, for it is very improper to be impertinent on any occasion. And you know, Lanty, that you have behaved as ill as possible—every body must say that, and you must bear it patiently. Now, go home. I promise for Mrs. Burrowes, that she shall say no more about the gown—at least, that she shall not say much."

That Mrs. Burrowes should ever afterwards preserve an impenetrable silence on the subject of the ill-fated gown, was, perhaps, too much to be expected; but Dora was aware that her sentiments towards Lanty were not quite so sanguinary as he apprehended. The finale to the grand dinner at Charlesborough, had more than reconciled her to the disappointment; and if Johnny Munroe had not still persisted in requiring what appeared to her a superabundance of resignation and forbearance, it is probable he would have been much sooner restored to favour. If, therefore, she indulged at times in a few harsh expressions, it was more for the sake of consistency, than from any real feeling of ill-will; and it required but the necessary quantum of coaxing from the young lady, to insure his pardon. After a little

moralizing, and not a little praise of her own placability, she at length consented to forgive him, without any mental reservation — strongly protesting against the further requisition of forgetting, which Dora most unreasonably tacked to the original demand. When the housekeeper's pacific inclinations were notified, the wrath of the subordinate members of the family quickly subsided. Alice O'Neil was specially invited by the dairy-maid, to come, as usual, on churning days, for buttermilk; and Lanty having had the good luck to save Mrs. Burrowes's favourite Guinea-hen from the jaws of a fox, was looked upon as a benefactor to the whole family.

In the mean time, all the measures taken by Lord Colverston and others, for discovering the authors of the late outrage, completely failed. With the exception of St. Leger, none of the real offenders were even suspected, and after a few weeks, the incident was scarcely alluded to, and the strong interest which it had at first excited, was rapidly dying away in the obscurity with which it was enveloped. Notwithstanding these favourable circumstances, the spirits of the committee, and their agents, were greatly depressed. That some of their secret was in Lanty's possession, his grandmother declared her firm conviction; for although he was as incommunicative to her, as to the bench of magistrates, there were several little facts, which, when put together, amounted to proof, that his impertinence to Miss Milward had no reference to their dispute about the cap, but was a stratagem to keep her out of danger. Suspicion, therefore, naturally lighted upon Delahunt, who, besides his unwillingness to engage in the

affair, was always a prime favourite with Lanty; and as naturally an apprehension was excited, that he might make further discoveries in another quarter, particularly when tempted by a reward of eight hundred pounds. This suspicion was carefully concealed from him by his accomplices, lest it might drive him to adopt measures for his own safety, by turning king's evidence; but the feeling of distrust was so strong against him, that it was impossible to restrain it at all times. Even his friend, St. Leger, though strictly warned to keep a fair face to him, could with difficulty repress his indignation at his traitorous conduct, and now shunned his society as carefully as he had before courted it. The young man felt all the misery of his situation, and had a sad foreboding of its consequences. He knew too well the stern nature of the system, whose laws he was suspected to have infringed, to hope that his offence would be passed over. He knew also, that summary justice had been unrelentingly inflicted in other instances, where the transgression was light in comparison to that with which he was charged, and he could plainly read his death-warrant in the countenances of his most intimate associates. Under this impression, he did not dare to sleep in his mother's cabin. Night after night, in the middle of a stormy December, he shifted his quarters from the fern-field on the hill to the swamps bordering on the bog, till his suffering of mind and body became nearly insupportable; and with the inconsistency very natural in a person so circumstanced, he often wished for death, while taking so much pains to avoid it. Just at this time, Mr. Costigan's man-of-all-work died, and his

place was offered to Delahunt, whose activity and diligence counterbalanced, in the farmer's estimation, the few flaws in his character—the worst of which was his intimacy with Connel St. Leger. At any other time, such an offer would have been rejected with disdain; for a Delahunt, man or woman, had never yet been known to go to service. Some very near connections had certainly been reduced, from time to time, to great straits—even to the necessity of travelling, *alias*, begging, in the neighbouring counties, during the summer months of a year of scarcity; but they had, hitherto, been preserved from the still deeper degradation of servitude. Besides, Wat was a landholder. He had a farm of three acres and a rood, which, after paying rather a high rent, supplied potatoes sufficient for the support of himself and his mother; so that, in this case, the degradation must be regarded by the country at large as both wanton and wilful. However, on the present occasion, Mr. Costigan's proposal was acceded to at once. His house offered a safe asylum during the long winter nights: and his mother, who, though ignorant of the full extent of his danger, guessed that he was an object of jealousy, made no objection to the arrangement, and was only solicitous to persuade the neighbours, "that the never a bit of the lucre of gain tempted him, but only a wish to pay a compliment to Mr. Costigan, and a wish for a little more company nor herself in the short days, which was natural enough in one of his years."

She was particularly eloquent on this topic to Alice O'Neil, who called to light her pipe at her house, the day of Wat's instalment in his new office;

but Alice was sullen and reserved, answering either in monosyllables, or by a quick shake of the head, the meaning of which it was very difficult to interpret, as it might be a sign of assent, or it might be a hint that the subject was disagreeable. Mrs. Delahunt explained it according to the latter interpretation, and as she had her own reasons for wishing to stand well with her visitor, she endeavoured to be as agreeable as she could.

"You had a long walk, seemingly, this morning, Mrs. O'Neil? You look tired and jaded, and haven't your own sprightly way at-all."

"I had a wary tramp of it," answered the other, "all the way to Corrigheenawanyagh. Peggy Mahaffy's beautiful cow is sick, and herself lying; so I offered to go to the friar, to get him to read an office for the cow; but I'll not do the like in a hurry for a Christian, let alone a baste, I can tell you."

"That friar is a holy man, by all that I hear of him," said Mrs. Delahunt, "and one that does a power of cures. It would be happy for the country if we had more of his pattern in it. Isn't it a wonder to you, that Father Duff doesn't take to that trade—a man with his edication—and not let others get money and credit to his disparagement?"

"He never was up to the thing," said Alice. "I remember him now thirty-four years, and I can say, with a safe conscience, that barring a scoulding to a man in liquor, he never stretched out a hand, or opened a book, to cure even a blast, or a fairy-stroke. I brought a sick child to him myself, once, that was terribly wrought with the convulsions, and what had

I for my pains, do you think? He just bid me bring it to the Doctor."

"I believe he was ever a *quite* man, that loved his ease better nor his money," replied Wat's mother. "But will you resolve me, Mrs. O'Neil, what is the reason that holy priests isn't so common now-a-days, as they wor afore now? Why, as well as I can hear, there is but four in all the country, and long ago every parish used to have its own, as I have hard."

"The badness of the world is the rason," replied Alice, "and the dispensaries, and infirmaries, and doctors, and schools. When I was married, there was only one doctor within fifteen miles, and he only for the quality. Then we had luck, for ould Father Corny M'Cudgel had the place all to himself. Ah! he was the fine man, who would do as many cures in one day, when he was in the humour, as another would do in seven years."

"I often hard tell of him," said the other, "how he could explain what the dumb brutes was talking to one another about."

"Troth, Naupla, dear," said Alice, relaxing from her sulky fit, "I seen the little birds hopping before him, as he walked on the road, and turning about to hear what he was saying; for he had a fashion, when he drunk a little hard, of talking to himself. He was one, too, that wouldn't let a man, that wasn't of the rale sort, stand before him. There was few then in the place, compared to these misfortunate times; and they would run up to their necks in a bog-hole, sooner nor come across him, when he was hearty.

Did you ever hear what he done to one of the Thompsons, that made the whole family turn to mass?"

"Never," said Mrs. Delahunt, drawing her stool closer to Alice. "It was a wicked thing, I'll engage, since it frightened them for their good."

"It was a thing to give them a warning the longest day they lived," said Alice. "As sure as you're a living woman, and that that blessed fire is there, where it is, he turned him into a sod of turf!"

"Oh! Mrs. O'Neil, dear," exclaimed Naupla, raising her hands and eyes, "of all the terrible things I ever hard, and that bangs! Oh! sure, if it was a stone, it would be some consolation, for, then, one might lie in pace and quiteness for ever. But a sod of turf! Oh! musha, musha! Why, what was to hinder the first that come by from tossing it into the fire, and burning it all, body and bones?"

"It's as true as you're sitting there, Naupla: I hard my mother tell it, before I can remember any thing. And it's likely you didn't hear of how he sarved the Gilligan's about the son-in-law's letter? Well, I'll tell it to you. The ouldest daughter, you see, made a match of her own with a soldier from England: and people said, when she was in other places with him, that she went his way, though she wouldn't confess it to her own. Be that as it may, he was sent abroad, and she came back to her people, as proud and grand as any lady, with gold bobs in her ears, and nothing as dutiful to her clargy as he required. But he was up to her; for one day, when he was in the house, the boy brings in a letter from the husband, and laid it on the dresser. She made an offer to take it, when Father Corny only gave one

look at it, and it swelled, and swelled, and swelled, and swelled, and went on swelling, till it filled the whole house!!!"*

"Well, wasn't, that enough to daunt a Turk;" cried Naupla. "If I was alive then, I suppose the trimbling wouldn't leave my heart for half a year, if it didn't kill me for good. But tell us, Alice, will the friar, up there at Corrigheenawanyagh, ever equal Father M'Cudgel, do you think."

"Pah" said Alice, scornfully, "he was born in a worn-out time, and is no more".....

A voice was at this moment heard outside the door, calling so loudly and so incessantly, "bee-a, bee-a, bee-a," the usual gathering cry for turkeys, that Mrs. O'Neil was forced to stop short in her speech, and the next moment a girl entered the house, in a state of great agitation.

"For the pity's sake, Naupla," said she, "did you see them unlucky ramblers of turkeys, that will be the death of me, before the last of their ugly throats is stopped? This is the third time they have strayed away since yesterday; and the feet of me never will recover the hardship they got, follying them through the sharp stones of Luggelas, where I tracked them this morning afore."

"And did they give you the slip again, so soon?" inquired the mistress of the house. "You have your

* The Editor cannot vouch for the truth of the two miracles recorded by Mrs. O'Neil; but he knows a Protestant woman, upon whom the bare relation of *them*, and others of a similar description, made so strong an impression, that she turned Roman Catholic when she thought she was dying, about four years ago. He had the story from her own lips. Some of our readers may be glad to learn, that she did not long continue a member of the Church of Rome.

own bother with them, to my knowledge. But for that matter, one can't be angry with them, for they are the foolishest birds that ever came out o an egg."

"Foolish!" cried the girl. "Never bleeve me, if I an't ashamed of my life, to say I have any call to them, when I meet a dacent stranger on the road, and they looking so woful, and running this way and that way, and rising a cry, as if one was after beating the lives out of them. My heavy hatred on them, any how, for I never knew what rale misfortune was, till the like of them gawky, straggling, yelping pack came across me."

"They are a torment, Ileen, and that's the best we can say for them. But come in, and take an air of the fire, girl. You'll be perished entirely if you don't give yourself a warming."

"Oh! not a foot of me can go in, or stop a minute," said Ileen, still advancing into the room, till she was close to the fire, when she recognized her former neighbour, who had been sitting with her back to the door. "Is that yourself, Alice?" she cried. "Who would have thought to see you here, so far from home, in such terrible weather? But it's you had always the love for the road. Let me go far or near, I'd be sure to meet you, either coming or going; and it wouldn't surprise me, if I went to the end of the world, to meet you there before me."

"I go no where only about my own lawful business," said Alice, "nor never was given to galloping, late or early. There's them I could name, has gone far enough, as it is, and is likely to go farther nor is pleasing to them, if they don't mend their manners."

"If you mean me," replied Ileen, with provoking good humour, "you haven't said one word of lie; for if them unfortunate bastes, (I hope it isn't a sin to call any thing out of it's name,) but if they don't get a little discretion, they may drag me after them to the bottom of the black north before they stop. Oh! if I had a penny for every mile I have walked after my wary charge, I'd be the richest woman in the Barony of Glen-ard, by this time."

"If you are so tender of your feet," said Alice, "why did you leave the genteel place you had, where you might sit, like a lady, half the day with your hands before you? And why did you hire with Christie Balf's wife, who can't afford to give meat, drink, and wages, to one that won't do her business?"

The tears stood in Ileen's eyes. For a moment she was at a loss for an answer, but quickly recovering her gaiety, she replied, "Ah! what's come over you, Alice, to be so sharp and nyarragh this morning?—you that can be agreeable of an odd time, when your temper will let you. The dear knows I want a little comfort in my heavy trial; so tell us how is the mistress, and the master, and poor Lion, and the other people about the place? I guess the mistress takes on worse nor ever, now that Paddy Mulheran is dead."

"I never seen a greater alteration in a woman," said Alice. "She's coming round to be herself entirely—singing through the house like any lark, and stopping half the day in the kitchen, to hear the news from who will tell it, instead of moping by herself, as she used to do."

"What good would all the reading do her, if it didn't stop the fretting after a while?" asked Mrs. Delahunt. "Edication and breeding is a great blessing, Mrs. O'Neil; and I ever remark, that them, that got the most of it, hasn't proper feeling, like us poor, ignorant creatures, that knows nothing."

"As for that," she replied, "all the edication in a school-master's head won't do without content; and Mrs. Costigan found *that*, when she found Christian Rooney. She never was shooted with a girl before, and she can't say three words without a commendation on her. I ought to be thankful enough for my luck, seeing it was me put in a good word for her, to get the place."

"Why then, Alice," said Ileen, sighing involuntarily, "though you think it vexes me, yet I'd be glad of any thing would please the mistress; and I would only be the more glad, the contenteder she was, supposing even it was to my disparagement."

"Good rearing," continued Alice, with a moralizing shake of the head, "is a thing that passes count; and Betty Rooney gave nothing else to her three daughters. It's long before one of them would have her name kicked about the country, like a football."

Ileen rallied her spirits.

"Talking of good rearing puts me in mind of Lanty. Ah! how is the poor unnatural creature?—Do you think he will ever be cured of that ugly temptation he has, to destroy every body that comes in his way?"

"What did he do, Ileen?—Did he ever offer to destroy any body, barring Miss Dora?" asked Mrs.

Delahunt, eagerly; regardless of the grandmother's feelings, in her anxiety to hear an interesting anecdote.

"He had Mrs. Falconer choked, all to nothing," answered Ileen, "only Johnny Monroe hallood a big dog after him, and he was forced to quit his hold, just in time to let her draw the last breath was in her body. The gentlewoman packed off, the next day, to Carragh, where she stayed under the guard of her old uncle, till she went away to England, and she promised never to come back, if she don't hear that he has the luck to be hung or transported."

"Who cares where she goes, or what matter about her?" cried Alice, pale with anger. "She's nothing but a fire-brand, and a liar, if she trumped up that story about the child."

Ileen continued, "I wouldn't stay at Kiladarne, after I heard that, if the mistress would offer me a pound a quarter; for what good would money do me, with him for a neighbour, to keep me in dread of my life, late and early."

"Take care of yourself," said Alice, looking at her furiously. "Mind, I say, take care of yourself. Don't meddle with me, or mine, or you'll rue it, no matter what wall you lay your back against."

"She's only joking, Mrs. O'Neil," interposed Naupla. "Do you thing I would listen to her myself, speaking that way of Lanty, only I know she is not in earnest? Why it would be a sin, and a terrible sin, to redicule one of God's own, like him. Ah! can't you sit down, Ileen, and talk sensible and cool, and you'll see what good company well be, in a minute."

"Not a bit of sin, or bad meaning, had I in my heart, when I drew him down," said Ileen, "only just

to vex her, who is always thraping at me, for no reason but her own temper. And since I gave her sperrits a little rise, I want no more enmity or ill-will between us. Oh! don't mind wiping the stool for me, Naupla. I'm in a hurry now would kill twenty men, and I couldn't stop a minute, if you gave me my lap full of gold."

She had retreated about a pace and a half from the fire, when she stopped to welcome Murtagh Cummusky, who had entered the house unperceived, during the debate between her and Alice, and to whom she repeated the story of her woes, protesting in the end, that if she never was glad to see him before, she was joyful enough then; for, of all men living, he was the most likely to give her some account of the wanderers, as the people said, he could see as well with the back of his head as the front; and would know the differ between one of the "boys" and another, fifty perches off, in the darkest night. But notwithstanding these peculiarities of vision, the tinker denied all knowledge of the stray turkeys, and after a few words of condolence on her manifold misfortunes, and hopes of their speedy termination, he inquired for Wat Delahunt, with whom he said he had a little business.

"He slipped down to Kiladarne, this morning," replied the mother. "Mr. Costigan had a trifle of business, so he couldn't refuse obliging him, for a little."

"I'm in no hurry," said Murtagh: "another time will do as well. Will he be about the place this time to-morrow, do you think?"

"Why should he?" said Alice. "Isn't he hired to

Mr. Costigan in place of Paddy Mulheran: and where would you look for him, or any other servant-boy, but at his master's, where he has his work to mind?"

"Hired at Kiladarne!" said the tinker, laying his budget on the dresser, and leaning on it as he looked steadfastly at Alice.

"Is it gone to be servant-boy at Mr Costigan's!" exclaimed Ileen, sitting down on the stool, and drawing it closer to the two old women.

"That isn't it at all," said the mother. "He only just went out of a compliment to Mr. Costigan, till he can provide himself with a care-keeper: for what call had a boy like him, with full and plenty at home, to go out for wages? He won't get a penny by it, and he has nothing to do but walk about and please himself. I said the world and all to him to make him give over, and scoulded till I was wore out; but he was tired with idleness here at home, so he thought it better to put his hand to something by the way of divarsion."

"He didn't like this lonesome place in the long winter nights," said Alice, looking significantly at Cummusky.

"The boy never thought of that," said the mother, earnestly, "till myself put it into his head, and cried shame upon him to be sitting with an old woman like me, when he might have company to make him cheerful. Besides, a little help will do us no harm these bad times. The most I can do, is to keep hunger outside the door; and it's wonderful to think how the poor can get living at-all."

"It's famishing times, as I know to my cost," said

Ileen. "The donny bit I put in my head does me no good, looking at the ocean of poor coming to the house, that I darn't stretch out a hand to, barring six in a day. Nothing keeps the life in me, only the races I have after them unruly torments, that were only hatched for my sorrow."

"Mr. Cummusky," said Naupla, willing that the conversation should continue in its present course, "you that goes far and near, following your calling, has a right to pick up knowledge and instruction; so, maybe you can give a guess why the ground begrudges to grow the food as it used to do."

"I suppose becase it's growing old," replied Murtagh. "People gets weak, as years thickens on them: and according as I can understand, the world is a good round age by this time."

"Young or ould," cried Alice, "it couldn't be other nor it is, with the way the poor is robbed and massacreed out of their little substance, to support in grandeur him at Rathedmond, or that Archdeacon at Dunoran."

"Poo, poo! where are you driving at now?" asked Mrs. Delahunt. "I'll never deny it, but I got more from them two, and the like of them, nor ever I have; and if they were banished, it's a matter of surprise to me, where yourself, Mrs. O'Neil, would find a roof lower than the sky to put your head under."

"Who thanks them?" cried the old woman bitterly. "We have a good right to all belongs to them; for isn't it our own? At any rate, it's not me alone thinks bad of them. Don't the Parliament speeches

in the newspapers say, that they are the scourge of the country; and isn't all hands at them, to give them a fall."

"Troth, I hope they'll be disappointed, whoever is at that work," said Naupla, "for some of us would come down with them."

"They'll come down, I tell you," said Alice. "They'll come down—low—low they'll have to work for their bread. Their children will have to go out to their sarvices like any other poor body's. What a beautiful sight it will be," she continued, laughing, "to see the daughters milking cows, and sweeping out the floor of a dirty cabin!"

"May I never sin, but it isn't lucky to stop under one roof with your shameful tongue," said Ileen, rising.—"Don't listen to her, Mrs. Delahunt, if you expect luck or goodness over your head, for she says what is unpossible and wicked to look at, by no means. Only think of Miss Dora, dabbling about, the way she wants her, and more nor that, having to carry a pail of water on her head, or running after a set of common turkeys, without shoes or stockings, like myself! Before that trial would come upon me, I'd drownd myself in the first ditch, out of pure malice and pity."

"So would I too, Ileen," said Naupla, "and I'll tell you more what I'd do. I'd beg round the world for her, before she would demane herself—and if I could not get it by fair means, I'd steal for her, and I'd sell to the last faggot off my back, and I'd live on half a meal a-day, to keep her as genteel as becomes her. Oh! you may laugh till you're sick, Mrs. O'Neil, but if you pass by her goodness to you, I'll

never forget her tenderness to me and mine, when I was in the parish. Your spite won't have power over her, or one of her kin. She was born a lady, and she was bred a lady, and my prayer, late and early, is, that she may be a lady in heaven, supposing even that myself has only the same poor lot there that fell to my share in this world."

"You are nothing but a pair of fools," said Murtagh, taking up his budget, "to mind what an old woman is raving about: she'd say ten times worse to vex you, once she goes into one of her contrary humours. Come along with me, Alice, for I'm going your way, and I like pleasant company when I can get it. Ileen, I'll give you a call one of these days—a girl, like you, is a fortune to a man of my trade, you make so much work for me. It's likely I'll see Wat soon, Mrs. Delahunt, and I'll tell him you sent him your blessing."

"That woman," said Ileen to Naupla, as the tinker and Alice left the house, "will do more mischief before she dies; and I wonder she isn't tired of the trade, seeing how little good she ever got by it, barring the destruction of all belonging to her. I must be off now—I never have a minute to spare, like another, for a little discourse with a neighbour, and the poor sperrits I ever had, is fairly worked out of my bones. If any body comes to look for me, you can say that I gave a call just to ask after them wicked hounds, and that I was turned upside down with confusion. If I'm alive this day month," stopping again at the door, "I'll give you leave to say, Naupla, dear, that I an't natural, for ten girls couldn't stand the half of what I go through."

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW evenings after Mr. Duff's visit, the household of Kiladarne was thrown into a state of the most nervous excitement, by the sudden announcement of Mrs. Costigan's intention of paying a visit to the glebe, on the following morning—an occurrence which had never yet been known at that season of the year, or indeed at any other season, without at least a week's notice, which was generally the shortest space of time in which due preparations could be made for such an undertaking. Two hours before daylight all hands on the premises were at work, and a number of extra hands called in to help. One messenger was sent for the smith, to contrive temporary make-shifts for the sundry nuts and screws, which had disappeared from the jaunting-car, during its long vacation—another was despatched for the cobler, to put the harness in order—a third had a run of four miles to a first cousin of Tim Lonegan's, for the loan of his white stockings—and a fourth had a still farther race to Derrynaslieve, for some yards of penny cord to brace one of the springs, which had been broken nobody knew when, "but it was done long ago." Mrs. Costigan was also very busy, and more fussed and hurried than on similar occasions. Her muff and tippet required shaking and airing, and her cornelian broach was mislaid, and the ribbands of her best bonnet were crushed, and wanted smoothing; and

Christian Rooney was no use, only to put every thing at sixes and sevens, and scorch, and soil, and crumple, and do the exact contrary to what she was ordered. Ned, who was rejoiced at his wife's intended excursion, took his full share in the multifarious business, transacting within and without doors, and worked so hard, that after seven hours of incessant bustle, the jaunting-car drove to the door, in very respectable visiting order, with Tim, as charioteer, looking so smart in his first-cousin's white stockings, and Wat Delahunt's new hat, that the eye must be very hypercritical and fastidious which would notice certain minor deficiencies in his other accoutrements. Mrs. Costigan's toilet was, at length, completed, and having taken her seat in the car, with a large basket of baking apples to balance the opposite side, Tim, at one and the same minute, gave a stamp on the footboard, a chirrup with his lips, and a flourish with his whip, and drove off with the air of Lady Thorndale's English coachman.

Ned hoped great things from this visit, and his hopes increased, as hour after hour passed over, and the sun had long gone down, before she returned. But he was sadly disappointed to find, in the course of the evening, that his hopes were unfounded. Instead of engrossing the entire conversation to herself, as on former occasions, he could scarcely get more than a "yes," or "no," to the questions which he thought most likely to interest her. She could not tell if Miss Dora's riding-whip had been found—and she had never asked how Mrs. Falconer liked her new maid—and she had heard nothing of how the

outlandish pigs looked and ate after they were made into bacon.

"Sally, dear," said he, at last, "I'm afraid you didn't get the welcome at the glebe, was always there for you before this; and, I am sure, if they are jealous of us, that they have no reason, for let who will run them down, I am clear to the world of ever saying a word could offend a stick about their place."

"If I was their sister," replied his wife, "they could not make more of me. I had as much respect paid me by Archy Flood, the way he helped me out of the car, as if I was Lady Colverstone herself; and as for them in the drawing-room—I need say nothing about it. Look what Miss Dora made for me with her own two hands!" taking from her pocket two of the very useful kinds of pincushions of the present day—one purporting to be a harp, the other in the more unpretending shape of a pair of bellows.

Ned was completely at a loss to guess the use of these glittering articles, but he praised them; and then praised Mrs. Milward and her daughter; and in the abundance of his kindly feelings, proceeded to eulogize, in regular gradation, every inmate of the glebe.

"It is no blame to Mrs. Milward," interrupted Mrs. Costigan, when his panegyric had reached Kitty Moore, "if I am not a joyful woman this evening. She spoke to me all alone, for as good as two hours, when I opened my mind to her, more like an angel than a woman; and she set my heart at rest about sin, which you know gave me uneasiness enough for some time past."

"No wonder at that," said her husband, "for of

all the women born, (not leaving yourself out, Sally,) she could know little about it. Then, dear, what makes you so cast down, if all the good was done to you that you say?"

"One thing was hardly clear to me," she answered, "when another began to darken my mind—and a thing that promises to give me more uneasiness than all that came upon me yet. I could not give vent to my thoughts to her about it; and I was glad to get away, when it fastened so close upon me."

"There never was a thought came into your head, Sally, that you need be ashamed of; and it was a pity you didn't out with it to her, who can give comfort to any that wants it—besides, what matter is there in only thinking, when a body can't help it?"

"Ned, you don't guess my thoughts, or you would not talk of them in a light way. I know you will be startled, but I can't keep any thing from you long, so I may as well tell you at once. I am dissatisfied with my religion, and I am beginning to suspect, that we are wrong, quite and entirely, and as wrong as wrong can be."

"Sally, dear, before you speak in so desperate a manner, only consider what Mr. Duff warned you, that though Mrs. Milward is loving and friendly, and the only woman in the world who couldn't say a wrong thing if she was trying; still she is not of the true sort, and would say every thing that is bad against our religion, for sure it is part of her trade, as one may say."

"She never opened her lips to me about religion—don't accuse her wrongfully. I only asked her what I asked Mr. Duff, and she resolved my question in

one moment, and gave me reasons for what she said, that nobody can say against; and which I will tell you, Ned, when I think them over to myself, so that I can explain them to your satisfaction."

"Don't bother yourself about me, dear. You know I was ever slow in taking in book-knowledge—I am willing to leave it to my superiors to have judgment and understanding, and them sort of things, that a man with his hands full of business couldn't be expected to see the good of."

"When I found there was truth in all she was saying," continued Mrs. Costigan, "it flashed upon me, that Mr. Duff was far astray, and that the catechism was a bundle of words, without much deep meaning; and that it was a wonder if our religion came from God, that it could not appeal to his own word for what it teaches, only in an odd place, here and there, just to stop us from using our senses. That thought had lately flitted once or twice through my mind, and I put it away from me; but now, here it is settled," putting her hand to her head, "and it will take more than a mouth-full of Latin prayers to get it out."

"Oh! Sally, couldn't you *crub* your spirit, dear, whatever you may think, and not talk against the Latin; for if we hadn't that, where would we turn to, to be safe from the devil, who would know every word the priest was saying, and spoil all, only he can't understand him in that language? But," he continued, suddenly rising, "I must go to bed now, being so sleepy that I can't for the life of me, keep my eyes open. A little rest will do yourself good, too, dear: it's all you want to banish them foolish

thoughts, that the shaking you got over that bad bit of the road, put into your head."

Mr. Costigan was too seriously alarmed at the heretical sentiments of his wife, to trust to his recipe for dispelling them; yet he was at a loss what side to turn to for assistance. Father Duff had so completely failed in his attempts to convince her, on the first declaration of her opinions, that it was useless to think of applying to him again; he therefore, after much deliberation, determined to call in a new auxiliary, in the person of Mr. O'Floggin, who was a well-drilled controversialist, and had the credit of lately making three converts to Popery—one, a drunken pensioner, who had married a Roman Catholic wife—another, a poor, broken-hearted woman, who was convinced of the errors of Protestantism, by the knock-em-down arguments of her Carmelite husband; and the third, a lady of respectable connections, who fell in love with high mass while on a visit to Paris. He was a little apprehensive, at first, of the consequences of his interference, knowing the mortal aversion she always expressed for the curate, on account of his lording it over Mr. Duff; but the emergency was pressing; and, accordingly, the next morning, instead of taking the direct road to the market, he made the circuit of six additional miles for the purpose of calling at the priest's house. It was long before he could prevail upon himself to tell the full extent of the mischief, or hint at any thing that could be construed to her disadvantage. He talked of her sense, and her goodness, and her reading, and her grief, and the pestering she got with Christian Rooney; and the foolish thoughts that peo-

ple with too much knowledge often had; and the necessity of having a softness of a sympathy in dealing with one whose senses were not always in their right place with over tender-heartedness; and the cautiousness and crabbedness that ought to be used in speaking to a woman, who more than himself said could answer an almanack-maker, if she was put to it; till he bewildered himself so completely, that he was obliged to commence his story over again, and tell the plain, downright truth without any palliating circumstance; in the end, beseeching of the priest to use all his skill to reclaim her to a dutiful way of thinking. His request was readily acceded to by O'Floggin; and as no time was to be lost, it was agreed that he should proceed at once to Kiladarne, and on no account to *let on* that he had put him up to it. The priest promised to keep his secret, and he felt, for the moment, quite happy, at having managed the business so cleverly, assuring him, as he took leave, that his heart was quite empty of any uneasiness now that he had put her into his hands.

Nevertheless, a little uneasiness lurked at the bottom, which began to be troublesome during his ride to Derrynaslieve, and which the hurry of the market could not afterwards keep down. "I'm sure I did right," he repeated to himself as often as the thought occurred to him—"maybe I did wrong?" "He is a powerful man," was another comforting reflection, which might have done much for him, but for the counter consideration—"To be sure, she hates him worse nor a blackymoor." "Any way," he thought again, "I'm glad they have it all to themselves, and that I'm not in it; and now, not a think will I think

about it any more. Though, after all," reconsidered he, "it might be better, every way, if I was there only to sit by. She is hot, and one word from me always cools her. He may be too hard upon her, and she may want my help. Mr. Duff has a right to say what he likes, but there is a differ between one and another; and a woman of her capabilities oughtn't to be brow-beat by—I wish I hadn't been in such a hurry—I wish I said to-morrow, instead of to-day—I wish I was at home—what's to hinder me going at once? Home I will go, for little business is doing here to-day." Having come to this resolve, Wat Delahunt was directed to carry back the oats, for which there was no demand, and Mr. Costigan, quickly mounting his horse, and spurring him into a lively trot, reached home three hours before he was expected.

Although he arrived in time to take a part in the controversy, being informed by Tim, on his alighting, that Mr. O'Floggin was in the parlour, and had been there since twelve o'clock, he appeared in no hurry to pay his compliments to his guest, but dawdled for some time about the out-houses, giving sundry directions in a very confused manner; and when he, at last, got inside the kitchen-door, the sound of O'Floggin's voice, pitched to a very loud, and as he thought, angry key, caused him to make a precipitate retreat again into the yard. To save appearances with Tim, and the other boys, he began immediately to scold them for doing what he had the moment before ordered to be done, till having thus gradually recovered a certain degree of self-possession, he again entered the house, and proceeded boldly towards the parlour

We don't like confessing that he stopped to listen at the door—we choose rather to say, that he paused there for a few seconds, before he put his hand upon the lock. That pause gave him new life; for Mrs. Costigan was speaking in a gentle and subdued tone, and the Priest answered without any perceptible warmth. Ned was overjoyed. He suddenly opened the door, and quite forgetting the preconcerted accident, betrayed himself at once, in the exuberance of his self-congratulation.

"Well, dear," he exclaimed, "you are not displeased with me, I see. Wasn't it more nor you expected, that I would hit upon so elegant a plan for settling all as it ought to be?"

"Mr. Costigan," said the Priest, "you are out in your reckoning, if you suppose she is likely to be brought round to a sense of her duty. She is determined to have her own way, and I am grieved to the heart to tell you, that it is the worst way she could have taken."

"O dear! O dear!" cried Ned, in despair. "What's come over the world, at all? and what will I do, to mend what is beyant my cure?"

"It is best never to meddle, Ned, dear, with what is only between the conscience and Him that is high above all," said Mrs. Costigan. "I know you did it all for the best, and I am not displeased with any thing you could do, was it ever so trying to my temper. The only thing that troubles me in it is, that I promised Mr. Duff, to open my mind to him first, and he will think I broke my word with him, when he understands how it is from this gentleman."

"It isn't to Mr Duff I will make my complaint,"

said the coadjutor. "I will go straight to the Bishop, and clear myself of having any hand in your downfall."

"Go any way is pleasing to yourself, Mr. O'Floggin—straight or crooked, as your fancy leads you—and if one Bishop won't serve your turn—why, tell it to two, and more after that, if your tongue likes the exercise. But don't try to lessen your superior, by putting blame on him, which he don't deserve. How could he guess what was close locked up in my own mind? And when he did come at some of it, he was as anxious as you could be for my good. He had as much reason too on his side, though not so many turnings and twinings, to hide the straight road from my eyes."

"Somebody is to blame," said the priest, looking solemnly at Ned. "And I must say, Mr Costigan, that you behaved very *imprudent* in allowing her to read books, and keep company, that could only lead a foolish woman astray."

"I had no foolish woman to deal with, Mr. O'Floggin, but one that always had as much discretion as..... no matter who; and I don't think it becoming in a gentleman to come into my house, only to throw foolishness in my wife's face."

"No offence, I hope," said O'Floggin. "But what am I to say to her, when she tells me she will pick up a new religion for herself, out of the Bible, and won't listen to the commands of the Church?"

"Sally, Sally, what's come over you, dear?"

"If by the Church, you mean yourself, Mr. O'Floggin, and the like of you, I will not listen to your commands: and if I am obliged, as you say, to pick out

a religion for myself, where would I be likely to find a good one so soon as in the Bible?"

"You hear that, Mr. Costigan! She sets up the Bible before the Church, even though I told her before you came in, that Saint Augustine says, he would not believe the Gospel, except on the authority of the Church."

"What will become of us, and where will it all end?" cried Ned. "Oh! Sally—think of St. Augustine—a saint and a holy man, and.....and every thing I suppose that is good."

Mrs. Costigan smiled. "There is no harm, Ned, in supposing the best of him, whoever he was—which is more than you or I know; and I don't fault his saying much, so far as I understand it, as I told this gentleman, not many minutes ago—and I repeat it again, Mr. O'Floggin, that neither would I think it safe to believe any thing on my own judgment, at this hour of the day, that was not believed by the Church, from the days of Christ, and which had never been heard of till I found it out, all by myself."

"Then why don't you submit to the commands of the Church, if you think so well of it."

"I will, Mr. O'Floggin, when I find out what it is, and where it is."

"And isn't the matter easily settled, then, dear?" said her husband. "For sure, don't you know that the Priest is our Church?"

"No, Ned; I have your own catechism against you for that. It says, that the true Church is the congregation of the faithful. And how can one man be a whole congregation, Ned?"

"It would be hard for him, Sally, if he wasn't a

conjuror, and I'd be sorry to have to do with card-cutters, or merry-andrews, or any of their sort."

"This is all nonsense," said the Priest, "proud as you are of your ingenuity. You think you have made a mighty fine discovery; and after all, what can you make of it?

"Why, Sir, that if the Church is the congregation of the faithful, you don't appear to belong to it, and I don't, or did not, till yesterday, belong to it, (if I do now,) and that I never saw one of my own profession that had the marks of it about them."

"What do you think of that?" asked O'Floggin, turning triumphantly to Costigan.

"Don't be frightened, Ned—I will make it plain to you, that I am not talking nonsense. What are the faithful but people that believe? And what are they to believe, but what God says to them? Mr O'Floggin won't deny that, only he says we ought to take it all from the lips of the Priest. Well, I will take it from him, and be thankful to him for it; but he won't give it—he never gave it—I believe he don't know it, and the poor people under his teaching can't know it—and how can they be called the congregation of the faithful? And how can I submit to be judged by them, who have no judgment?"

"You submit!" exclaimed Ned. "It would be a fine thing, indeed, if a woman like you was to be schooled and outfaced in knowledge, by the tag-rag of the chapel, every Sunday."

"The very arguments you think so fine, are those of all heretics and schismatics," said the Priest; "and what is the end of them? The Protestants in Germany are all turned infidels, once they set up private

judgment as their God; and many of the Protestants in this country are not better. So stop a little in your new course, I advise you, till you think where it may lead you."

"It cannot lead me to more infidelity than my old notions found me in. Do you know, Sir, that I often doubted if there was a God at all; and a clap of thunder, or a threatening of sickness, did more to convince me in that way, than all the religion that ever a Priest performed in a hundred masses. Then, what was my belief at the best of times? It was, that through your means, I hoped to cheat God, and steal into heaven; and I wished, when I was most religious, that he would have nothing to do with me, but let me die quietly, body and soul, and not be threatening me with another world, good or bad."

"Somebody has been to blame, all along—I see that, and".....

"Mr. O'Floggin," she cried, interrupting him with an impatient wave of her arm, "you are to blame—you are the most to blame of any that ever spoke to me on the matter; for all that you have been saying, has made me more sure that you are wrong; and that little can be said on your side. You have never answered a question, without running away to things that don't belong to it, and telling me what this one says, and what that one wrote, and never keep close to what God says. You ask me how I could make an act of faith—I make it on his word, Sir, and I won't delay doing so, till you give him a character. You put me off, by asking how I would answer a Socinian, when I want you to answer me: and you talk of Henry the Eighth, and Queen Elizabeth, as

if true religion must be a bad thing, because they had some of it, by times, in their mouths. You might as well tell me, that my new black velvet bonnet would be turned into an old felt caubeen, if Christian Rooney put it on her head. Now, that is foolish. It might not look so well on her as on another, but the stuff would be still the same."

"Every word that you say has sense upon it, in black and white," said her husband: "but I hope, dear, that you won't lend it to her for the patron, as you lent your shawl to poor Ileen, who was another entirely. Why, she would be a show to the world, and she would die of pride before she got as far as Alice O'Neil's. Now, didn't I tell you, Mr. O'Floggin, you'd be hard set to find words for her. Oh! if you could only hear how she bothers Mr. Duff, a man that can speak French as well as I speak English, you'd have gone to your books before you ventured to give her instruction."

"You have small reason to be proud of her, or yourself either," said the Priest, losing his temper at the implied inferiority to his rector; "and if you had the spirit of a Christian, you would take example by Jemmy Milady, who, when his wife would not follow him the right way, put her out at once, and is going as a pilgrim through the world, till he spends in that kind of penance the same number of years that he lived with her."

"Do I understand your Reverence, that it is your advice to me to put Sally out of my house."

"How do I know whether her name is Sally, or what it is? I mean that you ought to part *that* woman there, till she mends her manners."

"Her manners never displeased me, Sir; then why would I ask her to change them? I wouldn't know her other than she is, and I am too old now to cotton to new acquaintances. Ah! what do you make of me, Sir?" he added, with increased displeasure of voice and manner, "to put *me* on a par with Jemmy Milady; or what business is it of your's, to come between a man and his nature. Look at that woman, Sir. She and I have lived together twenty-nine years, in love and good-liking: we had our trouble but it didn't come on us by our drawing contrary to one another; and though it was sore, and though it was heavy, we bore it together; and with the blessing of God, we'll not part, come what may, till He that joined us gives the order for dividing us, and then we can't contradict *His* bidding."

"You are contradicting his bidding as fast as you can, both one and the other of you," said the Priest; "and there is no use in throwing away good advice upon you."

"Well, Sir, if we are so bad, leave us to our badness, seeing we won't mend. You told me already, that I had not the feeling of a Christian. Well, maybe I havn't, but I have the feeling of one of God's creatures, with a heart in my body, and I am ashamed at a man of your description, expressing yourself as if it was a stone wall you were talking to. Sally, would you believe me if I opened the door for you, and told you to be a stranger to me for ever? No, you wouldn't, dear. This house is your own house, and you have a right to say what you please in it, and what you don't please; and my heart is sorer nor it felt this many-a-day, for putting you in the way of

hearing words that don't become you, and that no other man dar to say to you, in my presence."

"I came at your own desire, Mr. Costigan," said O'Floggin, "and I'll not come again in a hurry, till I'm sent for more than once. I was a fool to leave all the business I had to come on such an errand, wasting my time, and having to listen to more nonsense than I heard for the last seven years."

"Hollo! you there in the kitchen!" called out Costigan. "One of you tell Tim to bring round Mr. O'Floggin's horse, and be smart, for the gentleman is in a hurry. Let me help you on with your *settoo* Sir—I believe it's a little tight in the sleeves. I am sorry to be after giving you so much trouble, and to put you out of your way. But you had no loss of the market, if you didn't want to buy, for it was ruining to the country.—A gentleman never left this house before without breaking his fast, and if you stop —well, well, Sir, it can't be helped—That lock is peevish—let me open it—I know the knack—Tim, can't you hold the stirrup for the gentleman properly.—A good morning to you, Sir, or, better to say, good evening; but the day passed so oddly to me, that if a man was to tell me it was grey day-light in the morning, I would'nt know how to contradict him."

CHAPTER XIV.

Being rather at a loss how to begin this chapter, we shall take the liberty of copying three pages of note paper, closely crossed, from Miss Thorndale to Dora Milward, about a fortnight after Mr. O'Floggin's controversy with Mrs. Costigan.

"At last I have a spare moment to dedicate to friendship and my dearest Dora. Do not be surprised at the unusual sentimentality of my style. There are good reasons for it, as you will confess, when you are informed of the sad truth, that, within the last half-hour, I have bid adieu, perhaps for ever, to Lord Farnmere. 'Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness.' Indeed, I might leave out the 'perhaps,' when I say 'for ever;' for though we, that is, the whole family, dared to do all that was becoming in man or woman, our darings and doings ended in nothing—I shall never be the Viscountess Farnmere.

"Poor man! we were delighted to get rid of him; and he was heartily tired of us all, before he was pronounced fit to travel. During the three weeks that he was confined to the sofa, with a sprained ancle, his dissatisfaction was expressed in a thousand little fastidiousnesses, bordering sometimes, within an hair's breadth, on absolute rudeness; and he tolerated our civilities evidently for no other reason, than that he could not escape from them. It was too apparent that he felt his situation pretty much as you, for in-

stance, might be supposed to be affected, were you obliged by dire necessity to spend some time in an Esquimaux hut, surrounded by good-natured savages, and soot, and blubber, and train oil. I give yon due credit for patience, and forbearance, and all the cardinal virtues; together with that most useful quality, the making the best of every thing; but still you must allow the situation to be deplorable, and that it would be impossible at all times to conceal your disgust from your harum-scarum hosts, however well-meant their clumsy attentions might be. We must not therefore, be too hard upon Lord Farnmere, particularly when we take into consideration the fact, that good breeding, at least so much of it as consists in respecting the feelings of others, is not the most prominent feature in the English character. I have not blundered upon this discovery myself, otherwise I might be afraid to hint it, even to you; but I have seen it in print, typed and stereotyped: I have read it as the opinion of foreigners, and it has been candidly allowed by good authorities among themselves. Now, this is a defect which I wish our neighbours, for their own sakes, as well as for our's, would try and mend: for they really play such fantastic tricks in their bearing to us of the land of potatos, as to move our laughter when they intend to strike us dumb with admiration. In the name of all my countrymen and countrywomen, I acknowledge them to be, as a people, far, far above us in the scale of civilization, but I protest against being fixed at the very fag end of humanity, which they would persuade us to be our proper station. And while I admit their superiority, nationally, I cannot allow every individual Englishman

or Englishwoman, to be necessarily superior to every individual Irishman or Irishwoman. I will also confess, that they could teach us many things, which it would be well for us to learn; and we will gladly put ourselves to school, provided our kind instructors will first take the trouble to inform themselves of the real extent of our ignorance, and will, in all cases, confine their instruction to what they are individually competent to teach. Do you remember Mrs. Major Cuttlefish? Was she superior to mamma in any thing except her receipts for mock-turtle and sponge cake? Yet on the strength of these two receipts, she meditated a revolution in every department of the state of Charlesborough; and domineered over my poor mother, to such a degree, that she would not venture at last to wheel the sofa towards the fire without her approbation, lest it might be construed into an Irish hugger-mugger custom. In one lecture on genteel economy, such as Lady Harrowgate practised, she had half persuaded her to metamorphose her old green satin cloak into a gown for me; and in another lecture on propriety of speech, absolutely frightened her into saying 'naughty child,' instead of 'bold child.' Her soup and cake we swallowed, for they really were excellent; and we still speak of her with respect and gratitude, as far as these articles are concerned, but we stoutly resisted every innovation for which a good reason could not be given. I protested, at once, against the cloak—first, because I did not want a gown; secondly, because I could afford to buy one; thirdly, because it would be shabby and dishonest to take her lawful perquisite from Mrs. Carrol, who had been expecting it for the last year and a half; and,

fourthly, because Mrs. Major Cuttlefish was very impertinent to interfere with Lady Thorndale and her family. Then Henry, my Eaton-and-Oxford brother, attacked her with literal meanings, and derivations, and synonymous terms, and roots, and analogies, &c. &c. &c. till he proved to *our* full satisfaction, that 'bold' was a much more proper term to apply to a wayward child, than 'naughty'—the one term clearly expressing all that could be meant in such a case, while the other might mean a great deal more; and that so far from it being a holiday and lady-like mode of expression, as she would have us suppose, it was adopted by a kind of good-natured slip-slop courtesy, with 'pin-a-fore' and 'put him on a frock,' and 'she was laying in her cot,' from the slang vocabulary of nursery-maids, and such like well-educated gentry—and that if ladies and gentlemen condescended to take pattern by them, for their own private convenience, they have no right to force their barbarisms upon us, who, truth to tell, have a tolerably competent share of our own."

"What shall I do? I have vented my indignation against Lord Farnmere and Mrs. Cuttlefish over so much paper, that I have not left myself room to say half the civil things my mother desired me, in answer to Mrs. Milward's kind note. The sum and substance of them, however, is this—that Lady Thorndale, and Mr. George Thorndale, and your humble servant, are very glad to be asked to Rathedmond; that we shall be with you at five o'clock, and purpose remaining till Saturday, unless my father should return before that day. You will, I am sure, excuse this incoherent scrawl, when I subscribe myself your ever af-

fectionate, though forlorn, forsaken, and heart-broken cousin,

"HARRIET THORNDALE, alias
Green Stockings.

"P. S. I hope you remember the young lady who figures so conspicuously in one of the Polar Voyages."

Miss Thorndale's sketch of Lord Farnmere might be somewhat caricatured; but on the whole, it was a tolerably good likeness. If it could be said that he ever used any exertion during his stay in Ireland, it was to make himself disagreeable, and he succeeded to admiration in this easiest of all undertakings. Nobody liked him—nobody admired him—not even Conolly Fitzcarrol, who, after practising at home for some days, could not venture upon a wholesale imitation—a detached piece of his lordship was all that he could make his own, and that only on particular occasions, such as a morning visit to the glebe, when the ladies were alone, or an interview with a tenant of his father's, who happened to be behind hand with his rent. Lady Thorndale was civil and well-bred to the last, though, like bluff King Hal's poor queen, often "vexed past her patience." Sir Ralph, also, was imperturbable, and the young people, who discovered that he had a very delicate ear for music, and who were themselves excellent musicians, generously passed by his innumerable impertinences, and contrived to get up a very respectable concert every evening for his amusement. But towards the end of his visit, Miss Thorndale had an attack of nervousness, which seized her unaccountably the moment she

sat down to the harp, and affected her so oddly, that she was always a bar and a half before her sister, who made many laudable, though unsuccessful sacrifices of time in her efforts to overtake her on the piano forte. Her fingers might fly quick as lightning over the keys, but the harp would still maintain its vantage ground; and Master George Thorndale, who accompanied them on the bass viol, as if afraid of disobliging either of his sisters, kept time with neither, but played his own part straight forward, till the discord often gave more pain to Lord Farnmere than his sprained ancle.

Perhaps nobody resented his manifold misdemeanors more than Willy Geraghty, as one after another came to his knowledge, through the various channels by which he contrived to pick up his information. He cordially forgave the repulse he had met with, when he tendered his civilities at the Carragh; for, as he said, an apology was made, and what could a gentleman require more? But he was interested in every body's business more than his own; and so many were aggrieved, either by being overlooked entirely, or having too much notice taken of them, in the way of refusing their requests, that he could think and talk of nothing else.

"He is the greatest nagur I ever heard of, besides being stupid and ill-mannered," said he to Wat Delahunt, who had taken shelter under the same hedge with him from a shower, and to whom he unburdened his whole mind in the absence of a more respectable auditor. "His agent told me that he pocketed every shilling of the May rent, and skrewed the arrears out of the unfortunate tenants, to the tune of eight thou-

sand pounds, Irish money. And what do you think he left after him for the poor? Just fifteen pounds, to be divided between the three parishes of Rathedmond, Liscormack, and Knockmandown! I told Mr. Milward that I would have thrown his dirty five pound note in his face, before I would be under a compliment for such a trifle."

"As for that, Sir," said Wat, "five pounds will be a good help to the poor, these hard times."

"But did you hear, Wat, how he treated Mr. Myars, when he went to him about a school at Knocknafushogue? He made him repeat the name ten times over, and then he made him spell it, and then he made him write it down; and after giving him all that trouble, he gave him nothing else, but said there was an act of Parliament to make the parsons keep all the schools in Ireland, and that they ought to do their duty."

"It was my grandfather built that old house at Knocknafushogue, where Paddy Rappery lives," said Wat.

"Oh! what use is there to talk about our grandfathers, Wat? People that never had one are more thought of now-a-days than their betters, if they have a long purse, no matter how they came by it. If you, my poor boy, were your grandfather, and if I was my own grandfather.....but there's no help for spilt milk—and let it rest there. Do you know the remark he made upon a compliment was paid him by Captain Dartry, Lady Thorndale's brother, a member of parliament, and first cousin to Lord Dunseveric? The Captain gave him his beautiful bay mare to go to see Lord Colverston, when the spring of his phæ-

ton was mending; and that day at dinner Lady Thorndale asked him, out of a piece of civility, how he went to Traffield House—and what was his answer? '*Somebody*,' says he, 'lent me a horse,'—and the Captain sitting opposite to him all the while. I leave it to you—was that manners, Wat?"

"It's no manners to fault any man's baste, to my mind," answered Wat, "and by the same token, Mr. Geraghty, that grey filly of yours is a rale beauty."

"Is'nt she, Wat? I'm proud to say, her match could'nt be had in the three kingdoms; and for that reason I called her Rob Roy, after Sir Walter Scott, who, Mrs. Falconer told me, is the greatest man in all England. But, talking of horses, Wat—isn't that a curious thing that's all through the country, about Ned Costigan putting Priest O'Floggin out of the house, and herself going to turn Protestant? Will she go to church next Sunday, do you think?"

"Not at all, Sir; they had only a bit of a wrangle, which she is fond of, to show her edication and reading. Why she often, as I can hear, leaves Father Duff without a word to say for himself; and it never spoils their friendship for one another. The clouds is breaking fast," he added quickly, looking over the hedge, "and I hope we will have a fine evening after all."

"I like your discretion, Wat, for not being in a hurry to speak of what passes in your master's house; but it is no secret, boy. The bishop called a meeting of his clergy about it, and was stark staring mad. Mr. Duff, and one or two others, got a rap over the knuckles for letting their flock be stolen from them by the ministers."

"He needn't be so outrageous for all the harm has been done," said Delahunt. "He ought to remember that if two or three misguided poor creatures sold themselves for gain, that we got two for one in their place, from your side, and people of responsibility and credit, too."

"I believe all the arithmetic you ever learned was the multiplication table, Wat. But there is a rule called subtraction, which you would do well to learn, before you expose yourself by miscounting. Haven't we thirteen born Romans going to church, and can you reckon more than three turning their backs upon it? Now, take thirteen from three—no—take three from thirteen, and what is your remainder, Wat?"

"Keep them, and make much of them, Mr. Geraghty," answered Wat, with perfect good humour, "let them be many or few—but don't you think we may count a lady like Miss Carberry, against a hundred such riff-raff?"

"Not a bit of her, Wat: she belonged to ourselves before her mother was born. She had the bad drop in her by the grandmother, who was of the family of the Dunduckedies—a people that it was hard ever to find out the colour of their religion; and the madness came by the Furlygigs, a very ancient and respectable English family, that settled here with Oliver Cromwell—and drank themselves out of the world, men and women, faster than they could come into it. So between the failings of both the grandmothers, it would be a natural impossibility for a Carberry ever to be right, but by a mistake. Few mistakes, to tell the truth of them, they ever made; and I never wondered more at any thing, than how a

young creature, come of her stock, could have lived eight and twenty years in the world, and do nothing before to prove her pedigree. Why, man alive! the whole lot of them, root and branch, had not as much learning between them as would make an apothecary. So, proud as you are of her, Wat, we will toss you eleven more Carberrys into the bargain with her; and after all, we will not let you count more than half a one for the whole dozen."

"But what will you allow us, Sir, for Mr. Oglandby, the handsome young gentleman who was on a visit to the Carragh last year, and left his pony with Miss Dora? They say he likes the old religion best, and has parted his family and friends for the sake of his soul."

Willy was taken by surprise, and answered at random. "Is it young Rupert Oglandby you mean—that wild young scamp, that was always reading Greek, and talking of the Romans? It was the old Romans he meant, Wat, and not the spalpeens that took their name afterwards. You don't know the difference, but I do. Julius Cæsar was king of the one, and young Bonaparte was king of the other. He wouldn't do such a thing for a mine of gold; and if he did it, it was only to take in the Jesuits, and have a laugh at them in the end. But supposing he did it, what great matter about a foolish boy—the youngest son, and one that was always getting into scrapes, and .....now, I am wrong—it's a bad thing to sconce the truth: it is not what a gentleman ought to do—above all, it is not what a man would be expected to do, who looks to the God of truth. And, Wat, I beg your pardon for trying to lead you astray; and I beg

his pardon," raising his hat from his head, "who says we should not do harm that good may come. Yes, Wat, that fine young man—for he is a fine young man, and a good young man, and mild, and gentle, and true to his word, and honourable as a king's son—has struck hands with the Pope, and now uses all his Greek and Latin for nothing, but to rummage out excuses for him, and to defend him for burning, right and left, all that won't obey his orders."

"They say, too," said Wat, "that other grand gentlemen, with college learning, to show them what is right, have gone his way; and this is what makes me judge, Sir, that we can't be so wrong as some in this country would persuade us."

Willy was again at a loss. He shook his head, and then brushed one cuff with the other; and then shook his head again. At length he looked his companion steadily in the face.

"The devil would tempt me, Wat, to disparage them and their learning for my own ends; and it is as much as I can do, to hinder myself from trying to make you believe I know more about these things than I do. But I won't—I'll stick to honesty, in spite of pride and shame. You see, Wat, it's but lately (more shame to my grey hairs!) that I thought about God at all; and though I know I have truth on my side, a clever fellow would soon leave me without a word, particularly when I am proud of myself as I was a minute ago."

"A man must either have learning himself," said Wat, "or look to them that has it, or I believe he would make but a poor hand of religion?"

"With or without it, Wat, we would all make a

poor hand of it, if we are too proud to take it, just as it comes to us in the Bible, fresh from God. It has often puzzled myself, why learning won't always lead a man right, seeing it is so useful for the world; but whatever is the reason, it don't do it. When our blessed Lord came to teach, all the learned people set their faces against him, and said his religion was not true; and you know, Wat, that it was true. I am afraid you will think I want to cry down learning, since I told you how small a part of it fell to my share; but even if you do, I must tell you what strikes my mind, that religion don't depend upon it at all—and why? Because the poor and the ignorant have as good right to it as their betters. Saint Paul, who gives us to understand that he was a well-read man, left all his learning behind him, when he went to preach the Gospel; and if he ever brings it in, at times, his meaning is clear and plain to all, which differs from the learning of these times, that makes what is dark, darker to them who have not the light of God's word."

"I like what you say very well, Mr. Geraghty," said Wat, "and if the rain wasn't over, I didn't care how long I stopped talking to you—not that you or any other man could talk me out of my religion.—Don't be offended, Sir, but I am sure it is the best, and will have the upper hand, sometime or other."

"Whoever lives longest will see most, Wat, provided he has his eye-sight. But though I think differently, and though I have no respect for your religion, still I have a friendship for yourself, and would be glad to see you a prosperous man. Ah! Wat, keep out of the way of that fellow coming down the

road there. If he don't mend, he'll have a rope about his neck yet; and take care that he does not tie the knot for you, too."

Mr. Geraghty turned away; and Wat, as if meaning to take his advice, jumped quickly over the hedge, but the moment he was out of sight, he again regained the road, and walked along at a very slow pace, till Connel St. Leger overtook him.

The greeting between the two friends was more cordial than on any interview since the affair at the grove. St. Leger spoke in his usual lively and unembarrassed manner, and instead of making an excuse to take different ways, proposed to go the longest road, to have more of each other's company. Poor Delahunt's heart overflowed with joy. He stopped, and, putting his hand on his companion's shoulder, said, "This is something like old times, when whoever was two, you and I, Connel, was all as one as one. And now tell me, lad, what made you make strange with me, this ever so long, and shun my company, as if I was your enemy?"

"Where was I to find you?" asked the other—"Would you have me go to Ned Costigan's place? a man that offended me more nor once to my face, and never stops abusing me behind my back. What brought you so low in the world, that you must turn servant-boy to the like of him, and shame your people, and them that wish you well?"

"You might guess, Connel, what drove me to take shelter under a safer roof nor my own. I was in dread of the country. Don't look startled, for I had good reasons for it. Not a man would bid God bless my work, and even yourself changed entirely; and all for

no cause: for if you tore the heart out of my body this minute, you would find nothing in it that wasn't true and loyal to all, and loving, and well-inclined as ever, to yourself."

"You had no need to dread the people, but they had a good right to dread you; for I may as well tell you, Wat, that all the water that falls from the sky wouldn't wash you clean from treachery. As sure as that blessed sun is going down behind Slieve Ronan, you betrayed our secret to that elf, Lanty M'Grail."

"I did not, Connel. He knew it, as he knows all that passes in the country. The grass can't grow without his hearing it, and he can read a man's looks quicker nor you would understand his words. I don't want to clear myself of trying to save her—I was positive about that; and if it was to do again, I'd do it. Before I consented to take part with you, that evening, when the blood-thirsty hounds would show no mercy to the innocent, I took an oath to myself, that I would save her life, though I was hung for it. I didn't know how to do it, till he threw himself in my way, and gave me to understand that he knew we had work on our hands. I only whispered it to him, that it would be better if she stayed at home, and he took my meaning, and promised that if he ham-strung the horses, or did any thing desperate, she shouldn't go to Charlesborough. I left it to him, for he had more schemes of his own nor my head could contrive; and he kept his word. I didn't leave myself trusting to chance neither. My mind was made up, that if he didn't bring me the news before seven o'clock that she was out of danger, to go at once to her father, and tell him to take care of his child that night, if ever he

expected to have her arms round his neck again; and then I would have warned you all what I had done; and if you were fixed to run into danger I would have stood by you to the last, once she was out of harm's way."

"And you don't call that betraying us?" said St. Leger, with a sneer.

"No, Connel; I would tell no tales, nor give no reason for what I said to the parson, more than that I had a good one. They might do their worst after, to make me speak out; but if it came to hanging, not a man of you should come to trouble by me."

Connel bit his lips.—"The only thing the people says is, that a man ought to keep his oath, whatever it is; and that they don't know how to trust one with two minds."

"That don't hit me, Connel, never having but one. The oath I took was to join in whatever was for the good of the country—at least, that was the way it was explained to me by Mulvaney, and the other *pollissed* villains, for I can call them no better. Well; I did their commands, even when I could see no good in them. I would have shot Mr. Oglandby, because it was plainly part of my oath to rid the country of his sort; but what man, barring a brute, would show me the good in murdering her, who has the blessing of old and young to track her steps, wherever she goes? And you know, Connel, that the very people who are angry with me now for not aiming at her life, would have cursed us in our graves, if she was carried home a corpse to her father's door."

"The people only says," still persisted Connel, "that when a man's hand is in for it, a trifle oughtn't

discourage him; and that it is hard to guess what one is at, when saying and doing goes by contraries."

"They won't be long at the trouble of guessing about me, Connel. I'll be far over the sea, before this day comes round in May. The first ship that sails for America, once the days are any length, will carry myself and my mother far from friends and enemies for ever."

"Are you in earnest, Wat?"

"Aye, Connel. Oh! sure, sure, I would rather stay in my own beautiful country, that there is no comparing with all under heaven besides, and where all my forefathers laid their bones, than go to the finest kingdom, though silver and gold might come down from the sky as thick as flakes of snow. But Ireland is no place for a boy that would keep a clean breast, and sleep the night through, without dreams to scar his senses—I never willingly wrought with their uncommon doings. It took all my love for you to drag me from one thing to another, till we went farther, Connel, nor I fear the priest will be willing to take on his own responsibility; and the last that was laid on me, gave me a turn against wickedness that I can't get the better of: so I'll try a strange place, where there is no need for the poor to make laws, which is all the fault I have to ourselves. It has been in my head, too, this many a day," he added, putting his hand affectionately on his friend's shoulder, "to flatter you along with us, Connel. We two would make our way from one end of the world to the other, if we were put to it. We have strong arms that labour couldn't tire, and we have light hearts that wouldn't easily sink, if nothing but hardship pressed on them. And

what a joyful hour it would be to me, to have you by my side, in a place where we might hold up our heads, and look every man in the face, without fearing what they might lay to our charge."

"I can do that where I am, Wat, so I needn't cross the salt sea to get courage. I have a strong pair of arms, no doubt of it, but they get plenty to do at home, and more nor their lawful share, while them in the big houses let theirs dangle by their sides. You'd soon have to bury me if I took to your way. Labour and quietness would never do with me: I must have a turn of sport, and a little bit of mischief now and then, to keep life warm within me. Besides, my boy, I have better prospects at home; and I'll wait here till my lucky hour comes round upon the dial."

"That may never come, Connel; and what a way will your soul be in if you miss a good place in the next world, even supposing you get all you want in this?"

"Troth, Wat, I can't say I have over-strong friendship for my soul, never having seen it to my knowledge, and not knowing what it is, or where it lives, or any thing about it. Let it take care of itself, and go to America with you, or any where else it pleases. It is my body I look to, for I know it, and have a liking for it, and I am bound in duty to provide for it, just as it takes a fancy."

"I don't mind you," said Delahunt: "I know you only want to draw me into an argument, to have a laugh at me in the end."

St. Leger imprecated a thousand curses upon himself, if he was not speaking the sentiments of his heart. "The only fault I could ever see in you, Wat,

was religion. It has done you harm already, and it will do you more, if you don't drop it. Leave it to your mother and all the old women, who want employment for their knees. We were born to stand on our feet, and walk up and down, as we choose, and ask nobody's leave for what we do. Religion does very well for Terry Mulvaney to throw in, when he comes across a votcheen like you, that won't do any work till the priest blesses it first; but he laughs at it, and he laughs at you for being so easy out-witted. I'll tell you all my mind about it, at once, Wat, that you needn't waste your breath with advising me. I only hate the Protestants because they won't join us in putting down the laws, and I hate the parsons because they have houses, and lands, and living, without working for them. But when we get shut of them, will we let the priests step into their shoes? Will we bale the clean water out of the well, only to let the dirty puddle run into it? No, no, Wat; we know a trick worth two of that. If they are upsetting, we'll whistle them after their brother black coats; and if they don't go at a word, maybe they will with a blow."

"Try your fortune with me, in America, Connel; there, I hear, religion won't come in your way, if you don't look for it."

"Stop," said his friend; "I see Ned Costigan standing on the double ditch, and I am not in the humour, this minute, of bidding him the time of the day. I hate him; and if you had such a love for me as you say, you would send a lump of a stone after his ugly head, sooner nor turn shoe-boy to one of his stamp."

"Shoe-boy!" cried Wat, indignantly; but repress-

ing his rising spirit, he offered his hand to St. Leger: "There's not a man living I would put before *you*, Connel; and time was you would say the same of *me*. Let that time come back, as it ought, and let us be once more friends, and let us promise that nothing will put between us again."

Connel shook him by the hand.—"I was jealous of you, Wat, but I see I was wrong; and from this out we are better friends than ever. Don't be afraid of the boys, I'll set all right between you and them. We'll have many a pleasant day together yet, Wat."

CHAPTER XV.

When St. Leger parted from his friend, he struck off into the fields, and followed a path for about a mile and a quarter, which led him to a farm-house, the residence of Mr. Terence Mulvaney. The ostensible cause of this late visit, was to procure a sample of oats for somebody who wanted to purchase a quantity; but the real motive was to tell him the result of his interview with Delahunt. Mulvany listened attentively to the recital, which Connel gave verbatim, with the exception of the epithet *pollissed*, applied to himself, and in the end, expressed his conviction that they had nothing to fear from him.

Mulvaney shook his head: "I draw another conclusion from you, Connel. I see through his scheme at once, and it is a deep one. He will keep quiet till coming on the assizes, and then, when we are off our guard, he will inform against us all; hang us all; pocket the eight hundred pounds reward; and go off to America, to live like a gentleman on his ill-got gains."

"If there is truth in man," said St. Leger, "he don't mean it. Didn't I tell you, how every word he said to me had friendship in it? Didn't I tell you that he wanted me to go to America with him, and that he has no look out but labour to live by, when he gets there?"

"He put his finger in your eye, till his scheme was

ripe. A soft word, I see, Connel, can make a fool of you, as it has of many a fine fellow before you. He told you how strong his love was for you; he will shew it by putting you out of harm's way; and he can be at no loss for a friend, having money enough to buy ten in your place."

"But what staggers me, Mr. Mulvaney, is, why he didn't inform again us before, if he is the traitor you take him for?"

"Because he hadn't his lesson pat, till he got a good schoolmaster—Ned Costigan is his adviser. From the minute Lord Colverston raised the alarm, and made Government offer money in addition to the large reward offered by the Oglandby faction, I could hear how them two were skulking together, and I soon guessed their business. I watched them close, and the more I could hear or see, the more I am sure they are plotting mischief. Costigan can't throw off the guilty look; for instead of coming up to me freely, as one neighbour would to another, he shuffles past me without a word, if he can, or a short ungracious remark, if he can't help making one."

"Still I don't see what they would be waiting for, all this time? Why not turn informers at once, as I said before?"

"How do I know all their reasons?—though some of them are plain enough to a man with half an eye. I know we are walking on traps, though they an't set yet; and I know we will be caught in them if we don't undermind our enemies. That Ned Costigan is a deep one. With all his easy ways, he never missed the fair minute for his own advantage, since the hour he was born. He is not sound at heart

neither for his country. We never could draw him in to take part with us in any good was going on; but he always made his own gain out of our failure. How did he come by Kiladarne? Wasn't it when the Killorans had to fly in the rebellion? And who knows but he is now looking after my poor inheritance, or Simon Taaffe's, when he puts up that young fellow to swear our lives?"

"I can believe any thing bad of him," said Connel, "since the day he spoke ill of me before the gentlemen. But I can't think that Wat would plot *my* death."

"Balderdash! Connel. Wouldn't you plot his death if it was the only way of saving your own life? Yes, you would, and so would any man, for life is sweet. Didn't he tell you he was afraid of us all? Didn't he tell you his own roof darn't shelter him? Look at it in that way, and put two and two together. Look at another thing. Mrs. Costigan has pride for a queen, and learning that would make a judge. She was ever a haughty woman; but since she lost her young one, she has no feeling left but bitterness against them that are better off than herself; and she would destroy on all sides, if it was only for the pleasure of destroying. Look farther off again than that. She has turned her reading against religion, and inveigled poor Mr. O'Floggin to the house to offend him; and when they both vented their malice on him, they showed him the door. Oh, Connel! Kiladarne may well make us look about us. She gets her instructions from the glebe, and gives them to her husband; and from him they go down to

his underlings; and they will soon be too many for us, if we go on careless as we are."

"As for what she did to the Priest," said St. Leger, "I wouldn't care a haporth, if it was only that. He can right himself without our taking his part."

"Nor would I neither," replied the elder. "It would do them good to give them a check of an odd time; and I don't let it go with them, when they want pulling down. But she affronts them with the Bible, and won't listen to a word that don't chime in with what she finds in it. Now, Connel, I am sixty-three years old, and I never knew one to look into that same book, that wasn't done harm to, little or much. It has the power of making the heart unnatural; and if a man goes on reading it, he won't put out a hand to help his country, but let the magistrates ride over us rough shod, at their will. Why, boy, she'd think it her duty to tell, if she had no other hatred to us."

"If I thought that fellow was deceiving me," said Connel, thoughtfully.

"He is deceiving you; and I wonder you that are sharp couldn't see through him, when I advised you to pump him, and talk fair to him."

"I wish you hard him, Mr. Mulvaney, when he cleared himself of intending bad to one of us, and I think you would have judged with myself, that he is true still."

"Didn't I hear him swear that he would stand by you in doing justice on old Oglandby, and don't I know that his piece was only charged with powder? That's true, Connel. I know what I know. Didn't

he cosher with a fool about playing tricks on Milward's daughter, though his trick was nigh blowing us all up? Isn't he hand and glove with them that neither wish well to us or the cause? What company does he keep? Did it come into your head to ask him what he was doing with Captain Geraghty, who slunk off when you came in view?"

"No," replied St. Leger: "for as I told you, I opened out to him, from the first, without wanting to look suspicious."

"You could have done that, Connel, and made your own remarks all the time. I think that tells against him, with every thing else. Isn't Geraghty whipper-in to him at the Carragh? And can a straw blow in the wind, that he hasn't it as a story to entertain the old tyrant? So that some things, that one would think I ought to know, come first to my knowledge from the footman that attends at table. Ah! Connel, Connel, we are in a poor way. I can't sleep at night, for the fretting about how we are amplushed, when all was going on prosperously, till a false-hearted traitor crept in among us. I expect every minute, to be dragged to jail, and a fine set of brave fellows along with me; and that we will die like dogs, to give room for cowards and turn-coats to live in grandeur."

"Why need that be the case, Mr. Mulvaney?—Why not play the game first ourselves, if it is to be played at all?"

"Because I see you, Connel, who I ever looked upon as a lad of sperrit, and the one that the whole country looks up to, to take the lead—I see you shutting your eyes to our danger, and letting your

worst enemy lead you blindfolded. Then, how am I to expect more conduct from them, without your sense and courage? Oh! if your uncle Tom was alive now!"

"You don't know me, Mr. Mulvaney," interrupted Connel. "Put the work before me, and I'll do it, though I walked through my father's grave to it. I seldom throw away much time in thinking about a thing. If it is to be done, let it be done—that's my way. Here's two hands wants employment; and little they matter what colour may stain them, so that good is done by them. If they come out red, why—there's water enough to wash them clean again."

"You are what I always thought you, Connel: and you will be a fine man yet, if we go on together as we have begun. One word for all, lad,—Ned Costigan is *your* enemy. He makes no secret of that—he is all our enemy. His wife would set the Liffey a-fire; and as for that Wat Delahunt, he is worse than all; for he is a run-a-gate. Their mouths must be stopped, some way or other, and that soon, or they will tell a story it's better not to have known. I will send you word, the minute I can fix a meeting with the committee, that we may consider it over with discretion, and out-scheme and out-plot them. In the mean while, keep clear of your old comrade, till we see what the committee will do with him. Stop, boy, and take a glass, this could morning. Here's your health, Connel. Let others go to destruction, if they choose, but don't you ever disgrace your name, which was high up in the country once, and will be again, I promise you."

Although Mulvaney spoke truth, when he com-

plained of the alteration in Costigan's manner towards him, yet he widely mistook the cause: and had he watched him in his intercourse with others, he might have discovered the same shyness to them, which he conceived was particularly shown to himself. Costigan knew that he was the object of general animadversion, on account of his unfortunate disagreement with Mr. O'Floggin, which was most unjustly imputed to a secret disinclination, on his part, to the popular religion; and having a very sensitive nature, he became dissatisfied with himself for the part he had acted; and felt ashamed to meet his acquaintances, some of whom would laugh at him for his complaisance to his wife, while the majority would blame him all together. Nor was he much more comfortable in his own family. Christian Rooney and Tim Lonegan openly expressed their horror of his conduct, and prophesied a coming judgment on their master and mistress. Wat Delahunt's disapprobation was as perceptible, though his mode of expressing it was less offensive; and his workmen and cottiers kept a respectful distance, unless when necessity brought them into contact. But his greatest cross, as he lamented, was from Sally herself; who, instead of comforting him under every trouble, as in former times, and taking his part, whether right or wrong, now sat gloomy and dejected, and found fault with every thing he said or did. Ten days of real misery passed over his head, and he was beginning to make up his mind to be quietly unhappy all the remainder of his life, when he was, in some measure, relieved by her confessing that she had not felt very well for some time; and after many struggles to shake off her

illness, she was, at last, obliged to give way to it, and keep her bed. She had no pain or ache, she said, and nothing was the matter with her, but only a shivering, and a heat in her skin, and an oppression about the heart, and a swimming in her head, and restlessness all over her, and a bad taste in her mouth, and an ugly contradiction in her temper. She was sure it was nothing but a smothering of a cold; and she would not send for a doctor, not being half bad enough; and she would just take a simple thing or two, and be well the day after to-morrow. Ned saw as little necessity for a physician, except in case of extremity, as herself: not that he grudged the expense, but he had, in common with the generality of Irish in his line of life, a superstitious dread of a physician, such as many civilized English, to whom we look up with all due respect, have to making their wills; and he was willing to put off the evil day as long as he could. The simple things were, therefore, immediately resorted to. The first was bleeding, which operation was performed by a practitioner in the neighbourhood, who had constant employment for his lancet among the peasantry. Then Dora Milward's only recipe of treacle and vinegar, with a few drops of laudanum, which had cured a variety of complaints, far and near, was applied to. Then Mrs. Burrowes's ginger cordial. Then Alice O'Neil's decoction of ground-ivy and cranes-bill—but all to no effect. She became daily worse, and showed so many oddities of temper, that she was almost persuaded to believe she was fairy-struck; and was hesitating about sending for a fairy-man, from a distant part of the country, when, happily for the poor wo-

man, Mr. Milward, who suspected, from the constant applications at the glebe for all the ladies' nostrums, that she was worse than was apprehended, paid a visit to Kiladarne, in person, and found her delirious, and with every other symptom of a high fever. A messenger was immediately dispatched for the physician, who verified his suspicions, and shook his head, and looked very grave and wise, as gentlemen of his profession are often obliged to do, when teazed to give an opinion upon the certainty of the death or recovery of the patient, which Mr. Costigan asked ten times in the space of ten minutes. That she had undoubtedly a fever was too true, and the news quickly circulated, to the dismay of the servants, and all the gossoons and runners attached to the establishment. Tim Lonegan was convinced that the judgment had arrived, and determined not to wait for his share of it; and as, fortunately, his quarter was to expire in seven hours and a half, he employed that time in scraping together his goods and chattels, and took an unceremonious leave that evening, without asking for the three-and-a-penny due to him. Christian Rooney was preparing to follow his example, but as her quarter wanted nearly as many weeks as Tim's did hours before its conclusion, her master, who feared being left without any assistance, threatened to make her spend the lawful time of her servitude in jail, if she did not remain in the house; and she was most unwillingly obliged to continue her kitchen employments; at the same time stoutly refusing to go into the room with her mistress, or touch any thing belonging to her. Alice O'Neil's proffered services, as a nurse-tender, were therefore gladly ac-

cepted by Mr. Costigan, though she was far from being a favourite with him or the invalid; and, on that account, he contrived to keep her out of sight as much as possible, except when her services were immediately required about the sick person, never leaving her bedside himself, during an interval free from delirium. But her dislike to Alice survived her reason. She often failed to recognise her husband, and addressed him as Mr. Milward or Mr. Duff, or any body, however unlike him; but she never was, for a moment, cheated into mistaking her; and if ever she called her by a different name, it was one that had much point in it, and was, consequently, more offensive to the old woman, than all the accusations brought against her for real or suspected misdemeanors. "A guilty conscience needs no accuser;" and Alice, well aware that much might be laid to her charge, placed to her own account all the quotations which formed a large portion of Mrs. Costigan's ravings; and she could detect an unpleasant allusion to herself, even in the musical sentimentalities of Young, on the value of time, and the rantings of Hamlet or Macbeth, in their supernatural perplexities. Together with her dislike to Alice, she was incessantly calling for Ellen Garvey, who, she fancied, was hid behind the bed-curtains, and was kept from her by her unwelcome nurse-tender. For some days Ned tried to soothe her, or, in his own language, to humour her, by telling lies without number, and promising that she should make her appearance in half-an-hour, or half-a-minute, when she had milked the cows, or boiled the potatoes, or completed some other household task. But this humouring had the

effect of keeping her attention constantly alive to the same subject; and one day, after a more than usual number of excuses had been made for her non-appearance, she informed him, with much solemnity, of an intimation from an angel the night before, that if Ellen Garvey did not give her a drink of spring water, out of the brown jug, by twelve the next day, she would be dead before the clock would give three ticks after that hour. Ned believed every syllable of this very probable story, brown jug and all, and instantly sent a message to Ileen, telling the purport of Mrs. Costigan's vision, and beseeching her by the four years spent in his house, and by the meat, drink, and wages, which were never grudged to her during that time, and by the memory of her grandfather, who was his own foster-brother, to be at Kiladarne before the fatal hour, on the morrow. When he had dismissed two gossoons on this errand, that one might be a check on the other, if either should forget any part of the message, his mind was tolerably composed, for he was certain that Ileen's good nature, which had never before failed, would not desert her on this occcasion; and to guard against all accidents, he stopped the clock at once; believing that her life was safe, so long as the hands could not move towards the dreaded point of the dial. Alice smothered her anger till she was in private with Christian Rooney, when she gave vent to it, in no measured terms.

"If ever there was a woman had an evil sperrit, it's her within there; and it's well for you, Christian, not to be about her, for her talk would corrupt a nunnery. You never hard the like of how she gets on. One minute she is making as if she was speaking

fond-like to her little daughter, and coaxing her to stay with her, and lay her head upon her breast—and then she will tremble all over, and tell her to go back in a hurry to where she came from, for that if she stayed with her, she would be destroyed. Then her tongue will run on from every thing that is wicked, to what is worse. Not a good name ever came into her head, barring thieves, and robbers, and murderers, and butchers, and kingdoms, and horses. The only innocent word I could hear from her after a long peramble about all that was terrible, was 'bare bodkin,' reflecting on me about the one was lost before I came to the house; and when I axed her, just to try and please her, what she wanted with it, she grinned in my face, and roared at me to quit her sight, because I had no marrowbones, or spectacles on my eyes. After that it is likely she'll be praying for a quarter-of-an-hour, without stopping, that it is enough to make one run out of the room; for not one word of saint, or angel or the Virgin Mary, will you hear from her lips; but only confessing her sins, and saying how she has a promise, and what not. She isn't right, Christian, and I wouldn't sit up another night, only this, with her, to be made a lady, for she has mischief in her head again me. All this day she has been raving about to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, always repeating it three times over—and then she accused me of a note she lost, and calling me the most wonderful nicknames, for being a thief, time out of mind. But she won't catch me to-morrow, I can tell her, to make me answerable for her note. Between you and I, Christian, I searched for it in every hole and corner, where I thought she

could have put it, just to give it to her, when she got better, and shame her for her evil thoughts. Ileen Garvey will have a chance to find it when she comes, knowing the ways of the place better nor me. We may never hear more of it; but mind now, Christian, if the old mother won't have a new cloak before this-day-month; and where will it come from?—that is, if the girl hasn't sense to stop where she is. She was glad enough to get her foot out of the house; and it's my rale belief she wont be in a hurry to come back to it."

Whether this was Alice's real belief or not, she was decidedly wrong in her conjecture; for Ileen, on receiving her late master's message, which was most faithfully delivered by two gossoons, pledged herself to be at Kiladarne before eleven o'clock, the next day; and would have accompanied her young friends at the moment, but that she was afraid to walk so far in the dark, with such feeble protectors. Mrs. Balf, as might naturally be expected, was a little hurt at not being consulted by her maid, as to the disposal of her time, and read her a long and sharp lecture on her ill manners, in not asking her leave, before she decided upon going to see Mrs. Costigan. Ileen, whose general deportment was cheerful and civil, soon succeeded in softening her mistress, and every thing was most amicably settled between them, when Miss Balf, who had hitherto taken no part in the argument, pertly asked her mother, if she wanted to send a message for the fever, and loudly protested that if Ileen went to such a place, she would go off to her married sister, and that they might all die of the

fever, before she would put her life in danger, by coming to look after them. Mrs. Balf became alarmed, retracted her leave, and on Ileen still petitioning, and declaring her positiveness that nothing ailed Mrs. Costigan but a blast, or some sickness that had no name, she cut the argument short, at once, by declaring that she should not go.

"And if, after that, you go again my orders," she added, "I'll get another girl in your place, before your back is turned half-an-hour; and then see, who will let you in, with the character of a fever about you."

Ileen's heart almost ceased to beat with alarm; for she dreaded a fever nearly as much as Margaret Balf; and the loss of her place at such a season of the year, might throw her, perhaps for months, a burden on her mother, who was supported mainly by her wages. But she did not hesitate.

"I might as well die of the fever at once," she said, "as die after of shame and spite again myself, if I let her go out of the world, without stretching out a hand to help her. So, Mrs. Balf, I'll do my duty; and I won't trouble you by coming again to your door, once I pull it after me. If I live, I will speak well of you, for you deserve nothing else from me—and if I die—oh! the sorrow word of miscredit will any body hear coming out of my mouth about you or yours."

Ileen passed a restless night, and half-an-hour before day, she left the house, carrying her bundle in one hand, and her shoes in the other.

"I have five hours still, before I'm wanted," she

repeated to herself, as she shut the door, "and I may as well do it, since it came into my head. It will be of use to me any how, whatever card comes upmost."

She commenced her journey in a half run, and instead of taking the direct road to Kiladarne, which was distant about five miles, turned down one which added seven more to her walk. After travelling for upwards of an hour, she made a sudden halt just as the sun appeared above the horizon, at a place where the road ran close to the margin of a lake. The scene was wild and romantic ..... But we are conscious that we have not the talent for landscape painting, with mere pen and ink, or, indeed if the truth must be told, with any other implements we know of. We must, therefore, confine ourselves to simply saying, that in front of where she stood, there was a well, and a large tree, and a broad lake fringed with wood; on the opposite shore of which, rose a castellated mansion; and farther on to the left, a picturesque cottage-house peeped through a thick plantation. At her back, a long range of dusky mountain, thickly studded with cottages, stretched far to the west, under which was snugly sheltered a small neat church, with the parsonage close beside it. Any of our readers, who may take the trouble of grouping these objects properly in their imaginations, can easily conceive the scene, at such an hour, to be, what it really was, beautiful. But Ileen was like Sir William of Deloraine, the accomplished knight, who did not know his a, b, c. "Little recked *she* of the scene so fair." She neither looked at sun, or lake, or mountain, but instantly commenced operations. First she laid her bundle and her shoes on the ground, and

advancing to the tree, dropped a slight curtsy, made the sign of the cross on her forehead and breast, with a quick motion of her right hand, and then knelt down upon the grass. After continuing in that posture for some minutes, she regained her feet, and encircled the well, at a slow pace, twelve times, repeating prayers very busily all the while, the amount of which, she carefully registered on the beads, held in both hands. Her devotions, it was evident, depended more upon her fingers than her mind; for during her perambulation, her eyes were fixed with great curiosity upon another devotee, who, early as the hour was, had been on the ground before her. She was an elderly woman, who performed her rounds on her bare knees, in a smaller circle than that described by Ileen; and apparently suffered much pain from her exertions. The stations of both pilgrims were completed pretty nearly at the same moment, and as the elder rose from her knees, she cut off a lock of her long, grizzled, black hair and tied it on the thorn-bush overhanging the well. Ileen, who watched every thing that she did, quickly tore off a narrow stripe from the red cotton-handkerchief, which enclosed her stock of wearingapparel, and fastened it also on the bush, which was thickly hung with rags of every stuff and colour.

"Though I do this, honest woman," said she, addressing the stranger, "the never a bit do I know what use is in it, being the first station that ever came in my way; and, it's only half for myself, and half for another. So I would be for ever thankful to you, if you will tell me about it; for it isn't for nothing you would destroy so much of your fine head

of hair, to stick it up there, only to be a shillycock for the wind."

"I do it," replied the other, "afraid they might forget in heaven that I was here, but Saint Losser, when she sees it, will know who it belongs to, and will remind them not to pass me over."

"In that case you are safer off than me," returned Ileen; "for it would be hard to know my poor bit of a handkecher from any other rag, when it is turned white, with the rest of them. But that don't trouble me; for I don't want my business to be remembered more nor a week or so, and the pattern won't be bleached out before that. You have a power of duty on you," she continued, "if one may judge from the terrible condition your poor knees is in?"

"I have performed at thirteen different wells and holy places," she replied, "since I left home, and I have fifteen more to go to, before I stop."

"Why, woman, dear!" exclaimed Ileen; "if you don't take it asy, you'll wear out the bones themselves, not counting the poor flesh, that is going as fast as it can."

"It can't be helped, whatever comes of me," said her companion, mournfully. "The soul of one that's gone will have the benefit. Listen to me, girl, and take warning by me, if ever pride comes across you, as it did with me.—I had one son—The like of him wasn't to be found in any cabin far or near; no, not even in the houses where a coach stood before the door. I was so proud out of him, that I would give him the best larning could be had; and so, I scorned at our own old

Schoolmaster, that nobody thought much about, and sent him to the Lady's School, though it was cursed by the Priest. The boy himself would go, right or wrong, and I indulged him, seeing there was no one could come up to him in the book-knowledge. But the curse came on him at last—He sickened with me, and he died—I buried him last Michaelmas, when he was just fourteen; and as soon as my senses came clear to me, I took a vow to go from one blessed place to another, till I completed double the number of stations for every year he lived."

"It's a pity to hear you," said Ileen, "and I hope what you are doing will bring comfort to your heart; for it's a terrible sight to think of an elderly body like you scarrifying your two knees to no end. Oh!" she added, taking up her bundle—"I have my own pack of troubles, only I can't stop to tell them now—but if you knew them, you would wonder how I am able to crawl, much less to walk."

She again took to the road, and in less than four hours from the commencement of her journey, arrived at the door of Kiladarne, where Mr. Costigan had been watching since the first dawn of the morning. The brown jug filled with clear spring water was instantly put in her hand, and by her presented to Mrs. Costigan, who, perfectly unconscious of her presence, drank it off: and then muttering her favourite aphorism, "Procrastination is the thief of time," which had given so much offence to Alice, sunk into a quiet sleep, from which she awoke in some hours, perceptibly better, and in a few days was pronounced convalescent by her physician.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE day of Mrs. Costigan's first appearance in the parlour, was kept as a little jubilee at Kiladarne; and Ileen concluded it by treating her fellow-servants, Wat, and Christian, to tea, in the kitchen. On such an occasion she was in her element. She delighted in nothing so much as in giving, and had carefully concealed the intended treat from her mistress, till she had laid in her stock of groceries and white bread, lest she should insist upon providing for it. The pleasure of the entertainment would have been much diminished, had the expense fallen upon another; but now she was the undoubted mistress of the feast, and was preparing to do the honours of it, with all due bustle and propriety, when the party received an unexpected addition by the arrival of Murtagh Cummusky. "The more the merrier," was Ileen's motto; and the tinker would have been welcome for no other reason than that he added one more to the company; but the welcome was doubly hearty when he told the reason of his calling at that out-of-the-way time of night, which was his uneasiness to hear news of the mistress.

"Being up the country for the last three weeks," said he, "I never hard one word of her sickness, till not passing four hours ago, and I couldn't sleep a wink all night, if I didn't know what way she was

in; for there isn't a woman in Ireland I have a greater wish for, nor herself."

Ileen quickly took down another cup and saucer from the dresser, and, drawing a stool for him next herself, made him take his place at the table, protesting, in Mrs. Costigan's vehement style, that she would take no excuse, without perceiving that none had been offered by her guest, who most readily acquiesced in all her hospitable exactions. From long practice Ileen could talk to half a dozen people on as many different subjects, while she told one story throughout, and never failed to take up the word in its proper place, however long or excursive the digression might have been. She, therefore, found no difficulty in acquainting Cummusky with every circumstance attending Mrs. Costigan's illness, and her own fears, and her courage, and the station, and Lion's joy at seeing her once again; at the same time reminding Christian Rooney of her head-ache, and how there was no cure for it like another cup, and the smallest taste more of bread and butter; and recommending Wat to take plenty of sugar, as nothing was so good for a tickling of a cough; and scolding the tinker for not making himself more at home. Murtagh exerted himself to please in every possible way. He ate, he drank, and laughed, and joked, and made himself so thoroughly agreeable, that Christian, who had been rather sulky all day, brightened up into an incessant giggle, and Wat almost forgot his dislike to him, in the fascination of his tea-table manners.

"Well, now," said he, "if it isn't a pleasure to look at ye three, living like so many kings and queens, without a haporth from one years end to the other to

give you uneasiness. There's not the house I know, where the boys and girls has the life yourselves has; and good luck to them that owns it, and good luck to ye that enjoys it; and may ye long have your health and sperrits, one as well as another, to be this day twenty years what ye are at this very minute."

Christian's brow gathered a cloud.—"As for me, I'm not going to stop in it," said she. "Hardship and fault-finding never shooted me nor mine, being of another stamp entirely. There's doings, too, going on in this house, that hasn't discretion on the face of them; and nobody need speak ill of me behind my back, for the sake of my place, for they have my free will and leave to sit down in it and welcome."

"Christian, dear!" said Ileen, "can't you not be reflecting on them that has no more call to it nor that pewter spoon! Would I say for or again it, till I opened it out to yourself? And didn't you tell me that you gave warning; and didn't you say on the back of that, that you wouldn't stop an inch beyant your quarter, if the house was turned into a castle?"

"Now is it worth the while of a pair of girls, the like of you," said Murtagh, "to be squabbling about sarvice, when one or other of you might have a house of her own to-morrow, with a girl under you to give your orders to? Why sure, Christian, you have nothing to do but choose your boy out of a hundred, any day. There's plenty waiting for you. And as for Ileen, we all know how she's provided for. Before May-day, my girl, you'll be fixed in the beautiful meadows of Tarmoncreesh. The bargain is just closed. The stones will be drawing for the house next week; he has seed praties to plant an acre, so

that you can begin the world without fore-thought to look after."

Christian repaired her smiles, and allowed herself to be pressed into taking another cup, though she had declared before the three last were swallowed, that she was full up to the throat.

"Wat," said Cummusky, when he had completely succeeded in establishing himself in the good graces of the two ladies, "what's come over you to be the mope the people says you are, since you come to this house? Is it the cold weather has put stiffness into your bones? They were all wondering as I came along the road, why you were not at the foot-ball a Sunday evening last, and I promised to get you to go next Sunday."

"I have so much to do, looking after the cattle," said Wat, "that I often can't be in time for prayers. While I am with Mr. Costigan, I must give up divarsion, he is so watchful about every thing."

"I will take your place, Wat," said Ileen, "for a couple of hours, a Sunday evening next, if you get leave; for keeping company so much with the dumb cattle would take the heart out of a stick, if it had one. I knew what that was at Christie Balf's, where I often thought my tongue would forget how to speak, having no Christian, often for an hour together, to open my lips to, only seven-and-twenty of the most crabbed-minded turkeys that ever sot upon a roost."

"More's the pity that your tongue should ever be stopped," said Murtagh, "for it would be a loss to more nor yourself. But no fear of that, Ileen; you'll soon have a companion would desire no better music, nor to hear it going from sunrise to the clouds of the

night. I must be in Derrynaslieve to-night," he added, throwing his budget over his shoulder, "and it will be late enough when I get there, to look out a lodging. Good luck to yees all, boys and girls, and may I live to see more and more of it on you, and on them will come after you."

"That's as pleasant company as I'd wish to sit in a room with," said Ileen, as the tinker left the house. "I never thought that a man with so ornary a face, could be half so agreeable and lively as he is."

"He has no more knowledge of being mannerly in company," said Christian, with a very fastidious toss of the head, "nor an East Indian. Did you notice how he never turned down his cup, or even put the spoon in it when he was done; and how he ate up every bit was put before him, without leaving a small piece to show he wasn't ravenish and half starved?"

"Ah! how would you expect manners from a tinker?" said Wat: "where would he come by them?"

"And maybe the place he came from is not all as one as this," apologized Ileen.

"Manners is manners," persisted Christian, "and every body knows that people in company oughtn't miscredit themselves by eating and drinking as if they were dry and hungry. I'm sure I wouldn't have tuck the half of what I did, only you wouldn't listen, and snatched the cup out of my hand as good as four times."

"You behaved beautiful, Christian. I wondered at you for your positiveness, and what little sups you contrived to take, only when our heads was turned."

"When I lived last year at Mr. M'Daniell's" continued Christian, with much self-complacency, "I

often hard genteel remarks about breeding from the young ladies, after coming from the boording-school at Borris-a-finnegan."

"Ladies, indeed!" said Wat. "Much about Denny M'Daniell's daughters. How would their father's childer come by genteel notions? They ought to leave that to their betters, and mend their stockings."

"Why shouldn't they know about it?" retorted Christian—"them that was at school, and went to a ball was gave by the officers, and carries their hankechers in bags. They had the best of instruction before and after; for didn't Miss Haggerty, the school-mistress, come to the house on a visit, while I was in it?"

"Is it the school-mistress herself, Christian?"

"Not a word of lie in it, Ileen. And it would do your heart good to hear her talk the most wonderful English, and reglate all before her. I one day hard her myself, telling them, when they were all going to dine at Mrs. Doyle's, on no account to touch any thing, but only a little white meat; and not eat all they got on their plates; and not, for the life of them, to take one spoonful more pudden after the first help; and, if they were pisoned with the drooth, not to finish the glass of punch, but just put it to their lips once or twice, when Mrs. Doyle would press them."

"It was a pity to throw away good meat and liquor on the likes of them," grumbled Wat.

"Then," said Christian, who became more animated as she continued her lecture on gentility, "she was mad if they said 'very well,' when any body said 'how are you?' it was '*quite well*,' they must say—not a pin matter whether they were sick or well at

the time. Mr. M'Daniell wouldn't be persuaded but it was larning them to tell lies, when, one day, his youngest daughter said her mother was quite well, and she keeping her bed with a terrible cholic. But Miss Haggerty was stiff, and, you know, Ileen, she knew best."

"To be sure she did," said Ileen. "But how does it come, Christian, that rale genteel people isn't half so genteel as them sort that only picks up a bit of it at school? Why there's Miss Dora, that will be a week together at Traffield House, with her mother, where nobody ever is allowed but lords and ladies, and she.....no, I won't be positive that ever, to my knowledge, I see her take a glass of punch, but, if I was on my oath, I could say that I seen her, above in that parlour there, once take a full glass of gooseberry wine to the bottom. And another time that she walked here with Mrs. Falconer, she finished every bit of cold hung beef was on her plate, so that I thought it a pity to have the trouble of washing it after her, she left it so clane."

"Stop that nonsense," said Wat, "and ready up the place, till I lock the door. Don't you hear the master calling for the keys? You are enough to bother the brains out of a man, haranguing about what you know as little of as my foot."

Long before ten o'clock every one in the house retired to bed, and all, in a few minutes, fast asleep, except Costigan himself, whose rest had been so broken, during his wife's illness, by constantly sitting up with her, that sometimes half the night elapsed before he could close his eyes. He had already counted ten and eleven, and was expecting soon to hear the

next hour strike, when he was roused from an incipicent doze by a loud knocking at his window, and a voice earnestly beseeching him to open the door. His first impulse on leaping out of bed was to seize his gun, which lay in the corner, close to his pillow; and then as the knocking continued with increased violence, he cautiously opened the shutter, and asked, "who was there," in that bullying style which always argues a certain degree of apprehension.

"It's me," cried Lanty M'Grail, endeavouring not to speak louder than was absolutely necessary to be heard by those within. "Open the door, and let me in, in a minute, for there's no time to be lost."

"Get about your business, you young imp," said Costigan: "what brings you here, disturbing the house at this hour of the night?"

"Let me in, I tell you," cried the boy, pulling at the iron bars which protected the window. "They are coming. They are not fifty perch off, and if they find me, they will murder me."

"Who are they, or what do you mean?" again inquired Costigan.

"Better not be parleying, Sir, but let him in, at once," said Wat, who had been awakened by the unusual noise in his master's room, and was standing, half-dressed, in the passage. "He was never given to bad naturally, and I'll answer for him, he has good reasons for calling us out of our beds at this hour."

"Take the other gun in your hand, then, Wat, and keep close behind me. But," stopping before he reached the door, "how do I know but the fel-

low has set the house, and is playing the decoy-duck on us?"

"I tell you," said Wat, impatiently, "that there is no fear. Give me the key, Sir, quick—and stand out of the way you two," pushing back Ileen and Christian, who were hastening to the bed-room.

"You'll get your death, dear," said Costigan to his wife, "quitting the bed in your weak condition. Let me and Wat manage it, and go with them two foolish girls into the room. It is nothing but some stray horse that he is bothering about."

But Mrs. Costigan kept fast hold of him, and the whole party hurried into the hall.

Lanty, who had followed the sound of their voices, from the bed-room through the parlour and passage, was now heard whispering through the key-hole—

"If you have the fear of God about you, open the door. If you don't, I'll be killed in the dark night; and they'll be in upon you, before you know where you are."

"Ned," said Mrs. Costigan, seeing her husband still hesitating, "it is always safest to do what is right. If the creature is in the danger he says, how could we answer before God, if we did not listen to his cry? So let him in at once."

"Are you sure there's nobody behind you?" asked Costigan, as he unlocked the door, and held it a-jar for a few seconds, before he ventured to open it.

"They are all behind me," said the boy, forcing his way in, and putting his back to the door, which Costigan instantly locked and barred. "They'll be

here in a minute; and it's your heart's blood they want, Wat, if you don't keep them out."

"Tell your story, child, that one can understand you," said Mrs. Costigan, trembling with agitation. "Who is coming, and what has Wat to fear from any one?"

"Wat knows them, and he knows what they have again him, and I know it's him they are looking after. I was watching them these two hours; for I guessed they had night business, but I couldn't know what airt they would turn, till I see them creeping by the Widdy's mering—and they are coming, sure enough; and Wat will never feel the cool of the morning again, if you don't keep them out."

"Run to the back door, Wat," said his master, "and drag the settle-bed against it; and fix the tongs in the sill; and stick the bit of bog-fir fast between it and the dresser. This door is strong, and can't be forced without a sledge; and if they go to that, what will we be doing, with a couple of guns? Why don't you help the boy, instead of whinging there, you two wonderful girls? Ah! go to bed, dear—there's nothing at all the matter. Quench that candle," he cried angrily, striking it from Christian's hand. "Do you want to show them light to shoot us through the crevices?"

The back-door was secured almost as soon as he had ended his directions; and then authoratively insisting that no one should speak or move, he leaned his head against the front door, to listen, having stationed Wat with a gun, to defend the other.

Some minutes passed in profound silence, within and without, when an angry growl, and then a loud

bark from Lion, warned them of the approach of somebody, in the direction pointed out by Lanty.

"Don't tremble, dear," said Costigan. "The house defies a regiment, unless they pull it down, stone after stone. And after all, it may be nothing to frighten a man yet."

Lion's bark became every instant louder and fiercer, till suddenly the animal gave a frightful yell; and after a few efforts to bark, which died away in convulsive sobs, he ceased to be heard, and a dead silence again prevailed.

Lanty's affection overpowered his fears. He shouted in a voice of entreaty, "Oh! don't kill poor Lion. He's the best minded dog, so he is. He'll never touch you if you speak civil to him, and say nothing."

"Whisht your noise," said Costigan, shaking him roughly by the arm. "The only way we can be a match for them, is to be cool and quiet, and take them when they are off their guard."

A few minutes more elapsed, and then footsteps were distinctly heard, coming round the house, but so noiselessly, that had not the hearing of those within been quickened by apprehension, they might not have been noticed. They stopped before the door, and Costigan, supposing the attack about to commence in that quarter, motioned Wat to his assistance from his former position, still imposing silence on the others, by gesture and whispered admonition.

That they were endeavouring to obtain an entrance in the least noisy way, was evident from their operations. Costigan could distinguish the sound of an auger, or some such instrument, which he conceived

was employed to make an aperture sufficient to admit the hand, by which the bolts and fastenings could be removed, without alarming the inmates. This caution he thought could only proceed from cowardice, and inspired him with fresh courage. He gave an animating wave of his arm to the terrified women, and again bent his head in the attitude of listening.

The attack, if such it could be called, upon the door, was continued for some time, but without success. Their instruments were palpably insufficient to pierce the new plank; and after whispering together in a hurried manner, and shaking the door gently, two or three times, they stole off with the same noiseless step, by the way they had approached.

"That is Murtagh Cummusky's foot," whispered Lanty to Ileen, as the steps passed the window. "I'd know it among twenty, for he hasn't the walk of another."

"The terrible man!" exclaimed the girl, "and the taste of my tea not out of his mouth yet!"

"Can't you have done there?" cried Wat: "they are not gone for good yet. I hear them climbing the gate into the yard, to try what luck they will have at the back door, since they were baffled at this."

"Well, we are ready for them there, too," said Costigan. "Follow me, Wat—and you, there, not a word, for your lives."

Wat was right. The same attempts were made at the back-door, and in the same bungling way; for though some boring instrument was applied to different parts of the door, no impression was made on the inside; nor were any external means applied to force it in. As in the former case, the door was slightly

shaken, again a low whisper was exchanged between the midnight visitors, as they receded towards the gate, a smothered laugh from one of them, would seem to intimate that their designs were rather those of frolic, than the deadly intention suggested by Lanty. This idea, which was eagerly caught at by Costigan, became strengthened, when a quarter of an hour passed, and no voice or footstep was heard through the silence of a very calm night.

"I believe we are a pack of fools," said he at last, speaking in a louder key than heretofore. "It's a pity we didn't bounce out on them, and spoil their sport. I'll bet any thing, they were fixing a notice from Captain Rock on the door, as they did last year. I'll just step out quietly, and fire a shot in the air, to show that I am not to be taken by surprise."

"You won't, Ned," said his wife, interposing between him and the door. "The marauders may be lurking about the place still; and no good brought them here, whatever took them away so peaceably."

"Well, dear, you must be pleased.—Go to your bed, for you'll be perished the way you are.—Christian, light the candle now, and go all of you to your beds. Wat and I will sit up by the fire, for a while, to see that every thing is quiet and right; for it's all over, whatever it is, and I am glad of it."

"It's little I'd think about it, to crack your ugly skull, you dirty brat," said Christian, turning angrily to Lanty, as she handed the candle to her mistress, "to give us such a start!—What business has a fairy-spawn like you, to be telling lies of people, and frightening the world to no end?"

"Don't abuse the poor thing," said Ileen. "If he

did frighten the life out of us, it was all in love; and I'll like him the better for it, for ever-out and after."

"Lanty," said Mrs. Costigan, "tell us now, boy, what reason you have for thinking that them that were about the house, this time back, had bad intentions to Wat Delahunt?"

"I know it's his life brought them here," he answered sturdily, "and I know they'll have it, if he stops in the country."

"Who are they?" asked Costigan, peremptorily. "Out with their names, at once, Sir, or you'll be punished well for your prevaricatings."

"All the neighbours round you was coming," said he; and then stuttering for some time, and looking at Wat, as if for permission to speak, he added, "Connel St. Leger was at the head of them, and Murtagh Cummusky followed next after."

"An't you afraid that the tongue would drop out of your head, after such a wicked lie?" said Ileen. "The boy wasn't about the place this night, so he wasn't."

"I hard his laugh, as he quit the door this minute," he insisted, "and I know they won't sleep asy till they have their revenge of Wat."

"Never listen to him, Wat, and keep your heart quiet, for if it is true (and it isn't) that he would wish you hurt, do you think I would let him, and I in the house? He wouldn't stir an inch beyant my bidding. He had some trick in his head, and that's all, for he hasn't the nature to rise a hand again his friend. Lanty—when every one had a hard word for

you, I wouldn't let you be run down, but since I see what you are—the back of my hand to you for ever."

Lanty was standing by Mrs. Costigan, in his usual lazy attitude, and apparently not much affected by Ileen's censure, when, all at once, his whole frame became violently agitated, his grey eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and seizing her by the arm, he screamed at the full pitch of his harsh voice, "The thatch is a-fire over our heads—don't you hear the cranching of the blazes?—Don't you see the sparks shooting by the windy?"

A deadly shriek rose simultaneously from all present. Wat dragged open the shutter of the window. "The boy says true," he cried. "We are lost:—The house is a-fire, and we are lost!"

"Oh! the villian!" exclaimed Christian. "He told me they only wanted to come for the two guns; and will I be destroyed for trusting to his word?"

"Silence!" cried Costigan—"Silence all of you, till I speak. We have nothing for it, but to force our passage out. You and I, Wat, will go in front, and clear the way. We'll sell our lives dear, any how: and if they kill us, who knows but their hearts will relent for the women?—Sally—this is an awful hour for us, dear—I didn't think we'd part in such a hurry. Take my blessing, dear—it's all I can do for you now."

"Let me go first," said Wat; "my gun carries surer than yours."

"The guns are no use," shrieked Christian: "I poured water in the pans, three times this day, as Connel bid me."

"God forgive you, girl!" said her master, paralyzed

by this intelligence. But recovering in a moment, he began to tear the bars away from the front door, calling on the others to rush out headlong, and not to be daunted by pikes or fire-arms.

But the door resisted all their united efforts to pull it open, being firmly fastened on the outside.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Costigan, with a very heavy groan, "we are indeed taken in a trap, and it is too strong for our weak hands to free us from it."

"Give me the hatchet," roared Delahunt, who had tried the back-door, and found that it was in like manner made fast on the outside. "Give me the hatchet, I say; and in three blows I will smash it in pieces, and I will smash them in pieces that stop me making my way out after."

"It can't be found," again cried Christian, frantically: "I flung it behind the dog-house, this evening, for fraid you would hurt them, when they came for the fire-arms."

Wat calmly crossed his arms, and leaned his back to the door, looking his master steadily in the face.

"Don't look at me," he said bitterly, "for how can I help you or myself? The doors won't open, and the windows I made too secure to my own destruction.—But an't they our neighbours, that often eat of my bread, and who knows when they see our distress but they will relent?"

He threw up the window-sash, and called out, "Boys! isn't it beyant thinking to see what you are about?—We're punished enough already, if we ever injured you, and don't go on to take our lives. Let us out, for the love of mercy, and we'll swear never to tell, and we'll keep our oaths.—Boys, boys, don't

pretend as if you didn't hear, for I see the shadow of three of you, at the corner, by the light of the fire. Oh! dear—Oh! dear—won't you answer? Well, then, kill us, men, if you must have blood, and I'll pray for you with my last breath—only let the poor women off safe.—There is one of them here, that the great God has just reprieved from death, and will you contradict his goodness, and dig the grave again that he ordered to be closed up? Oh! boys, don't you hear how I am crying more like a woman than a man, and won't you pity me in my feebleness?—No, they won't," he added, turning from the window, and throwing his arms round his wife. "They have no heart, for I hear them laughing at my distress."

Delahunt darted to the window—"Connel, I'm not fit to die this minute—The Priest's hand wasn't over me since I first saw blood; and you won't destroy me, body and soul, will you?—Connel St. Leger, what did I ever do to you?—I often offended my brother that's dead, for the love of you—I first took sin upon my head, for your sake—I hardened my heart to plase you—What are you about there?—Show me some friendship now, and shoot me like a man—Shoot me, I say, like a man, you villian."

"Let *me* speak," said Ileen, who seemed for some time insensible through terror. "Let me just only get back my voice, to speak cheerful, the way he likes.—Now you'll see what one word from me will do. Connel," she called, laughing hysterically, "do you know I'm in it, Connel? Have done with wanting to frighten us in play; for the senses won't stay with me. Connel! Connel! I'm the most raving girl

this minute, and I'm wild and distracted, and won't you let me out?"

"Not he, the villian," said Wat, pushing her from the window, "but if these two arms don't fail me, I'll still make a chance for our lives."

He seized the massive wooden bar, which barricaded the front-door, and forcing it between the iron-railing at the outside of the window, strained at it till the bars were bent, so as to make an opening wide enough to ensure their escape, if unmolested by the Rockites.

"I'll go first," he said, "and keep them at bay, if they offer to stop you."

His body was half out, when he quickly jumped back into the room, being shot through the breast, from the corner, where the murderers stood.

Another frightful shriek resounded through the house.

"Oh! Wat," cried Lanty, supporting him as he tottered to the wall, "won't you think of your poor soul? And all of you, what good will screeching do you?—Why don't you drop down upon your knees, and call out to God, for death is coming quicker on us nor we thought?"

The appeal was not lost upon them. All were instantly in the attitude of prayer, and Lanty rapidly poured forth his petitions, scripturally, though rudely expressed; declaring his own confidence that the fire could not separate him from the Redeemer, pleading for his companions in misery, and asking forgiveness for the poor misguided people without. A solemn awe pervaded the whole party, as they listened to, or joined in the petition of the poor boy, who, a short

time before, they looked upon as scarcely superior in intellect to his affectionate companion in the dog-kennel. But the quiet was of short continuance. A wreath of smoke was slowly winding from beneath the door of the inner room, which showed that the fire was fast penetrating the roof on that side; and again the house was filled with cries and lamentations; while, as if in derision of their calamity, a loud shout was raised from those on the outside, and two or three shots were fired in quick succession.

Ileen's reason seemed to have entirely abandoned her. She laughed, and sung, and danced; and then leaning her elbow against the window, invited her mistress to look at the reflection of the fire in the pool.

"Isn't that a beautiful sight?" she quietly asked a man who then appeared at the window.

"What are you all about, within there?" he shouted. "Why don't you run out, and the roof just ready to fall on your heads?"

"Oh! Mr. Ward," vociferated Lanty, clapping his hands in ecstasy—"We're locked in, Sir—burst the door, Sir—kick it till you smash it, Sir.—Hold me tight, Wat, and I'll drag you, while I have a hand.—Another bang, Mr. Ward, and it will be in.—Now you have it, Sir.—Here we are all.—Oh! let Wat out first—the boy that is bleeding.—Now, Wat, you are safe—and are you alive?—and is nothing the matter with you?"

"Lanty, listen to me," said Mrs. Costigan. "You could bring us to our knees, when the danger was over our heads; and now, that God has showed his goodness to us, won't you teach us to thank him?

For, shame upon us!—you are the only one of us who seems to know how to speak to him."

"Wait, Ma'am, till I get a place for poor Wat to sit down. But, what's this?" he said, stumbling over the body of a man, which lay motionless on the ground.

The fire flashed broadly in that direction, and glared on the wild features of Murtagh Cummusky, with the agony of death freshly stamped upon them; and at the same moment, the roof fell in, with a hideous crash, and a column of white smoke ascended magnificently from the ruin, into the clear vault of heaven.

CHAPTER XVII.

A LITTLE after nine o'clock, on the following morning, Mr. Milward entered the farm-yard at Kiladarne, already crowded with people. Willy Geraghty hastened to meet him.

"Isn't this terrible work, Parson?" he said, pointing to the still smoking ruins.

"Have any lives been lost?" inquired Mr. Milward; "for so many different stories have reached me already, that I do not know which to give credit to."

"Not one only two," replied Willy. "Poor young Delahunt is not dead yet, but he is speechless; and the priest is expected every minute to give him the rites of the church. As for Cummusky, the ugly tinker, he was shot by the police right through the head, at once, and he is lying in the cow-house till the coroner comes. Would you like to look at the shot? You never saw any thing go so fair through and through, as it did."

"How, and where is Mrs. Costigan?" asked Mr. Milward, detaining Willy, who was proceeding forthwith to the cow-house.

"She is in bed in the room over the barn, waiting till she can borrow clothes, to be able to go to Derrynaslieve; for nothing else is the matter with her. The night air that ought to have been her death, only revived her the sooner; and she is as cheerful and well as I saw her any day these twenty years."

"It positively is the most unaccountable thing," said Mr. Fitzcarrol, riding into the yard, and talking in his most out-Heroding manner to Terence Mulvaney. "Is it possible that it could have happened by accident?—those kind of servants are so careless about candles. I cannot be persuaded that any mischief was intended. It is altogether the most improbable story. Persons should be very cautious how they trust their servants with candles, particularly in a thatched house."

"Upon my honour, so they ought," said Geraghty, drily, "in any house, thatched or slated, if a dirty bit of tallow could fire away, and shoot people, right and left, with powder and ball."

"Good morning to you, Mr. Milward. Is not this a most unaccountable thing, and the country so quiet as it has been for such a length of time? It is really very mysterious—I am afraid we shall not come to the bottom of it soon, as Mulvaney tells me that the only witness likely to come forward is that idiot, whose testimony, you must be aware, could not be received in any court of justice.'

"I only told your honour," said Mulvaney, hat in hand, which was the way in which Mr. Fitzcarrol liked to be spoken to, "what I heard from Mr. Costigan himself; for how would I know, that was sleeping peaceably in my bed, little dreaming what was doing within half-a-mile of me? He said the poor, half-witted, innocent of a boy did surely mention the names of one or two, in his own blundering way; and the servant girl, old Rooney's daughter, said something else, but what it was they don't well remember in their consternation; and the poor crea-

ture is nearly out of her senses with the pain of her shoulder, which got a terrible bruise and burn by the chimbley that fell on her, as she was passing round the corner too near the house."

"The tinker, who I understand was shot," continued Mr. Fitzcarrol, "was, like all of his trade, a great rogue; and is it not very probable that he was the whole and sole contriver of the burning, hoping to plunder securely in the confusion? I cannot discover that he had any accomplices, at least on information that can be trusted."

"There were not less than a dozen men at that corner," said the serjeant of police, "when we came up; and they did not run till they saw their companion fall."

"And pray, Mr. Ward, what were you and your men doing, that you did not pursue the miscreants? Why did you let them escape?"

"I thought our first duty, Sir," said Ward, "was to save the people in the house. When we saw them out of danger, we did our best to come up with the fellows, though they gave us the slip for the present."

"Slip, Sir! Is that language to use before gentlemen? I disapprove of your conduct entirely; and I promise you it shall undergo a strict investigation."

"So much the better for you, Linny," said Geraghty to the serjeant, "for you will get the thanks of all the respectable gentlemen in the county. You acted like a man of sense and feeling, too, in stopping to save the lives of six honest people, instead of galloping after ruffians, who you may catch at your leisure."

Mr. Fitzcarrol would not condescend to notice

Willy, to whom he had a particular dislike, as he never could convince him that he was a great man. He was therefore obliged again to address himself to Mr. Milward, who was speaking to a man on the other side.

"The present proselyting system is dreadful," he began; "it is the cause of all the disturbances in the country. That foolish woman, Mrs. Costigan, has been, I understand, dabbling with controversy; and I more than suspect that her intolerance has been the cause of this unfortunate business. You must excuse me, Mr. Milward, for speaking my sentiments so plainly, but interference with the religious opinions of any people can never end in good—you must excuse me, Mr. Milward, I say."

"I beg your pardon, but I have not heard what you were saying. May I ask, what is it that you wish me to excuse?"

"Oh! never heed it, parson, dear," cried Willy, impatiently; "excuse it all in a lump, whatever it is, as becomes a man of your cloth. It will save you trouble, and leave you at liberty to say a word of comfort to poor Ned Costigan, who is coming over to us."

Costigan advanced cheerfully to Mr. Milward: "You are welcome, Sir," he said, "though it's but a poor place I'll have to show you to. However, if I had a castle over my head, you know I would be proud to offer you the best seat in it. My wife is longing to see you, Sir. Poor woman! she is in a bare condition like myself; for we had hardly time to throw a tatter over us, we were in such confusion and carelessness."

"I expect my daughter every moment, with the carriage," said Mr. Milward, "to take Mrs. Costigan to the glebe, where I hope you will both remain till you can provide yourselves with a comfortable residence."

"Costigan," said Mr. Fitzcarrol, before he could reply to this kind invitation, "I see you will be looking for heavy damages from the county; and I candidly tell you that I shall most rigorously investigate every circumstance connected with the occurrences of last night; and if I discover that any impropriety of yours has led to this outrage, I shall use all my influence with the grand jury to dismiss your claim at once; for I am determined not to give a premium to bigots and intolerants for disturbing the peace of the country."

"All fair and right, Sir," said Costigan. "I will ask nothing that is not agreeable to my character as an honest man—a character that I have always kept, and will keep, with a blessing, as long as I live. But supposing the county would never allow me one penny, it's little *that* would grieve me. Why should it? What am I the worse off since yesterday, only in the loss of a few sticks and stones? And if the poor boy over there was safe and well, there would not be a joyfuller man upon earth this minute nor myself."

"What'll I do with that Lanty M'Grail, Sir?" said one of the labourers, coming up to Costigan. "If you don't speak to him, there's no use in me giving him a check. He is destroying the garden to no end, burying the dog in the beautiful bed that was laid out for early cabbages, and no place else will serve

him, because he says the sun will shine on it in winter as well as summer."

"What business is it of yours to meddle with him, Barny Dillon? Nobody shall contradict him in any fancy he takes with me or mine. If he chooses to carry away the whole garden on his back, he is welcome to it."

"We are only losing time," said Hector. "Do you hear, Costigan. Manage to get me a chair and something like a table in one of the offices; and collect all the people who have had any thing to do in this transaction, that I may take their examinations before they have time to consult together, and frame a story to implicate those against whom they have private pique."

Costigan hastened to fulfil these directions—first escorting Mr. Milward to the door of the room, or rather loft, where his wife had taken shelter; and Mr. Fitzcarrol, glad to escape from the neighbourhood of Willy Geraghty, joined Mr. Duff who was then entering the gate.

Christie Balf, his wife, and daughter, though living five miles from Kiladarne, were among the first on the premises that morning. They had already taken four rounds of the yard, inspecting every thing with the most minute attention, and asking and answering questions on all sides; when, as if to vary the monotony of their route, they slowly crossed the very middle of the yard, till they came within listening distance of Johnny Munroe, who was engaged in conversation with Alice O'Neil.

"I don't accuse you," said he, "so what use in clearing yourself to me. But if you would take the

advice of a friend—that is, of one who wishes you well, as I wish all to be better than they are, and none more than myself, seeing I want it badly—you would go home, and not come here till you are sent for. Don't I tell you there's nobody cares for your company. Mrs. Costigan sent you word not to come into her presence, as she don't want to be angry with any body, or say a hard word to her bitterest enemy; and that poor Ileen, who has always a commendation for the worst if she can, says she has no call to you at-all, at-all; and Christian Rooney says you are the sorest sight she ever saw; and the master himself looked away as he passed you; and Lanty, your own flesh and blood, is skulking behind the hay-stack from you; so you may judge between them all there's poor welcome for you here."

"Dear Mr. Monroe, if I could only get my poor orphant away home with me, to give him an advice, and keep him out of harm, I would go away, and pray for yees all, though false lies may be put on me behind my back."

"Now, woman, I wish you would let me alone. Don't you see how you are provoking me to say what I don't want to say. Leave the boy where he is. He'll be better without your advice; and he'll be farther from harm the longer way he is off from you."

"No wonder you are in trouble, Alice," said Mrs. Balf, coming forward with a very innocent air, as if she had not overheard the conversation, "Mr. Costigan was ever such a friend to you. You'll be lonesome too, after the house, being used to be looking at it so long."

"It isn't true, I'm sure, Alice," said Christie, "that

Cummusky was seen quitting your place only about an hour before he was shot. For, says I to the man that told me, it is unpossible that any body would be so mischeevious: and the tinker, says I, was a fellow would push himself any where."

"Oh! Mr. Balf, isn't it a wicked world, when a sorrowful woman like myself won't be let die out of it, in respectability, as I always lived, without having tongues let loose again me? The man just called in to light his pipe, as he might do at your house, or another's; and am I to be dragged between wild horses, when I only handed him a coal in the tongs, what yourself would do, if it was asked when churning was not going on?"

"One must be neighbourly—that's true," said Christie. "And, says I to the same man, what would keep her up to that late hour?"

"I have enemies, Mr. Balf, that envies me the character I had for being no mischief-maker nor bag-biter. You see how they'll swear away my life for my tenderness to that straggling child of mine, that I have to sit up for half the night by times, when he takes a wandering fit with him."

"There's a power of money's worth lost, any how," said Mrs. Balf: "and what I think most of is, Mrs. Costigan's elegant muff and tippet, and her gold spy-glass. It's a long time before she will make up her fine stock of clothes; for I hear she saved nothing but a middling flannen petticoat, and her old blue mantle. I'm dying to know about the black silk gown she sent to the manty-maker to be turned, the week before she took the fever. If I could see Ileen Garvey, she would tell me if it ever came back. It

would be the greatest pity if that gown was burnt; for it was as good a silk as ever I handled. It had rale substance in it, and three flounces a finger and a nail broad at the bottom."

"Mother, mother," cried Margaret Balf, "there's Mr. Milward's carriage, and Mrs. Burrowes is in it, with the new bonnet was sent her last week from Mrs. Falconer in England. Let us run to the gate that we may get a sight of it."

At a much quicker rate than they were usually accustomed to move, all the Balfs proceeded towards the gate, and had an excellent opportunity of satisfying their curiosity; for Mrs. Burrowes was a long time in alighting from the carriage, and a long time adjusting a large bundle, which Flood had contrived to disarrange during the minute-and-half that he had it in charge; and a still further delay was occasioned by the necessity of scolding Kitty Moore for her idleness in staying out the whole of the morning, and nobody at home to do her business.

"Besides," she continued, "it's an unbecoming thing for one out of a gentleman's house to be curious about robbers and plunderers, and low, mean doings of that kind. Do you think that I would have put a foot inside the place, only that it would not be proper for Miss Dora to come by herself, and carry the bundle of clothes the mistress is sending to Mrs. Costigan, hearing how the poor woman was keeping her bed from want of covering? You don't know what is becoming your station, Kitty, living with the family you do; and I can tell you I am ashamed of you, and I hope you will be ashamed of yourself."

"Mrs. Burrowes, Ma'am," said Kitty, "you

wouldn't be angry with me if you knew all I went through. I couldn't walk a step for two hours, with the fright I got, no more nor if I never had a leg under me. What did Barny Dillon do with me, Ma'am, the minute I came to the place, but gallopped me off to the cow-house, to look at the terrible tinker that mended the dripping-pan, and the colander, three times over, and you know they are wanting to be mended again now, Ma'am. There he was, lying stretched out on the straw. The ball went in at his cheek, and out near the top of his head, the other side. When I seen that, my heart came up into my mouth with fright, at the escape the unfortunate man had, that it didn't hit his eye, for it was within half an inch of it; and I won't recover it these twenty minutes and more, I am sure."

While Mrs. Burrowes lectured the housemaid, Monroe was speaking to Miss Milward, who, pale and agitated, waited in the back ground, till her elderly companion should think proper to move on.

"Miss Dora," said he, "you have cause to be thankful and glad; and you have cause to wonder at yourself, when you think of what you have done—only you didn't do it—how could you? But it was done, and I am bound to honour you as an instrument in God's hand to show light to a poor despised creature, that my unbelieving heart would persuade me was born to live and die in darkness. Mr. Costigan told me he learned a lesson from him he can never forget, and she herself is more steadfast than ever to follow the word of God for her guide, seeing that it can give understanding to the simple—I see the poor fellow peeping at us from behind the hayrick.—Ah!

Miss, won't you beckon him over to you, and say one word of encouragement to him?"

"Not now, if you please, Mr. Monroe," answered Dora, quickly. "There are so many people preparing to listen, that I should certainly talk nonsense, in my anxiety to say something very proper. And then I feel a great inclination to cry; so much so, that I am afraid to trust my voice, even speaking quietly to you. But tell him to follow the carriage to the glebe, and tell him--tell him every thing that is kind from me, Mr. Monroe."

Mrs. Burrowes's eye at this moment glanced on Lanty, and she called him to her, in her voice of authority, which he had never yet seen the individual who had ventured to disobey. He, therefore, involuntarily obeyed her summons, though strongly tempted to run away; and he shuffled quickly towards her with a side-long motion—his head turned over one shoulder, so that his eyes were looking exactly in the contrary direction to that in which his body was moving.

"Come here, my good boy," she said: "I often spoke hardly of you, and I often reflected on you for the faults of others, without considering that many an ugly father has a beautiful child. I am now sorry that ever I did so, for I was wrong, and I am not afraid or ashamed to say so. And I tell it out before all your neighbours here, that there is not one of them, who might not be proud to have a son like you, and that he has marked you to grace. If you never had a friend before, Lanty, I am your friend from this day forward; and you may trust to my friendship,

child, for it never yet was given or taken away for nothing."

A general murmur of approbation from the bystanders followed the housekeeper's speech; and Dora, repressing her inclination to cry, which was momentarily increasing, advanced a few steps, and, in a manner almost as confused as his own, said, "Lanty, I am greatly pleased with you, and every body is pleased with you, and I hope, as nurse says, that God has indeed given you his blessing."

Tears—real tears—the first that ever were known to come from Lanty's eyes, rolled down his cheeks, while he listened, with a grateful expression of countenance to the voice of the only human being who had been uniformly kind to him. Mrs. Burrowes, Mrs. Balf, Johnny Monroe, and others, were softened, and applied immediately to their pocket-handkerchief, the corner of a shawl, or the back of their hand, to dry their eyes; and a general fit of crying was about to commence, when the approach of Mr. Milward gave Lanty the opportunity to slink away to his former retreat, and Mrs. Burrowes, settling her features into a very dignified expression, motioned the young lady to come forward, and take her father's arm.

"Nurse," said he, as he moved on with his daughter, "I am glad you are come, for Mrs. Costigan is sadly in want of your good offices. She seems unwilling to return with you to the glebe, but perhaps Dora may succeed in making her change her determination."

"Let me carry that bundle for you, Ma'am," said

Monroe. "Oh! Mrs. Burrowes, I insist upon it—it's fitter for me to carry it than for you; besides, you'll want your hand to hold up your cloak, crossing that dirty step by the turf-clamp.—Don't be afraid, Ma'am; I ll be as tender of it as yourself. Your commendation of that poor boy, Mrs. Burrowes, went home to my heart, and I am as thankful to you, as if you made me a justice of peace, or any thing that never could come into my head."

Mr. Milward left his daughter and her attendant at the door of Mrs. Costigan's little apartment, and sat in the stable with Mr. Fitzcarrol, who was engaged in examining Christian Rooney, till he received a message to say that she was dressed, and ready to receive all visitors.

"Mrs. Costigan is determined on going immediately to Derrynaslieve," said his daughter, on his entrance; "and will only promise to spend a day with us at some indefinite time, when she is quite strong, and the season advancing towards the spring."

"I opened my heart all about it to Miss Dora and Mrs. Burrowes," said Mrs. Costigan, "and I will tell the plain truth to yourself, too, Sir, that you may see it is not ingratitude or incivility. I would desire nothing better than to sit looking at Mrs. Milward, hour after hour, and she knows that. But then, what would poor Ned do? He would be put out of all his ways, and he would be uncomfortable, trying to do manners every minute, and not knowing the best way to go about it. Now, Mrs. Burrowes, I put it to you —could he sit all the evening in his old slippers, with his feet on the fender, talking to myself?—Could he be yawning out loud in the drawing-room, after be-

ing tired riding all the day? or could he rout up servants before day-light, sometimes, to get him his breakfast? and would he ever have a happy minute, running up and down stairs, with nails in his shoes? I must think of him, Mr. Milward, who never is tired contriving for my comfort, and I know he would not be happy if we were not left to ourselves to go on as usual."

"I can say no more," said Mr. Milward. "We were only anxious for your comfort, and you certainly require care after so severe an illness."

"There is care over me, Sir, which yourself will confess I may well trust to—witness the way I am this morning, strong, and composed, and cheerful, after undergoing what one would suppose was sent for my death, even though I was saved from the fire. And do not be afraid that I will presume on his goodness, by acting hand over head, as if I was to live upon miracles. I will take all the care of myself I ought, and leave the event cheerfully in his hands."

"I suppose you have not yet determined upon any plans for the future?"

"It is all settled in my own mind, Sir, unless an order comes from heaven to the contrary. We will live in Derrynaslieve, till we build this place over again, and slate it, to avoid accidents another time. The work shall begin at once. It will give Ned employment for his thoughts, and I will be counting the hours till I get back to it."

"You have the courage of a lion, Mrs. Costigan," said Mrs. Burrowes, "to talk of longing to come back to a place that ought to terrify the life out of you, only to think of."

"Courage has nothing to do with it, nurse. The awful passage of last night will, no doubt, often freeze my blood, when a start comes upon me by surprise, in the dead hour of darkness: but I would be subject to that failing, live where I might; therefore, I may as well follow my fancy, and there is no place suits it like this. Here I spent the happiest days that ever fell to the lot of woman; and when my turn of sorrow came round, it was here I again found peace —a peace, I believe, that will be left with me, whatever else may be taken. So, nurse, you see I have some cause to be fond of poor Kiladarne."

"Do you mean to say that you felt any of that peace during the horrors of last night?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Milward, I felt nothing but terror and bewilderment. My mind was for one minute calmed into something like it, when that creature who had his teaching from above, called upon a God of mercy, and made mention of the sinner's consolation; but the dreadful death that stared me in the face, quickly put it to flight again. I do not allude to any extraordinary feelings of my own then, or at any other time. The peace I speak of comes to me from the promise of Him who cannot lie; and he will keep his word, I am sure, though my heart should beat quick at the prospect of pain, or my senses refuse to help me in a moment of distraction."

"After all," said Mrs. Burrowes, "I never would sleep a night in the same place, if the whole gang, one and all, are not taken up and hung, to be a warning to themselves, and others that might follow their ways."

"Then, with all my heart, nurse, I hope not one of them may be taken. I don't want to meddle with men's lives, and it is my comfort that I can say nothing to injure a fellow-creature.—Stay a minute, Miss Dora," seeing Mr. Milward about to go away—"I have a little private message for your mother. I don't want to speak out," she continued, in a whisper, "till I prepare Ned, by slow degrees; but tell her that my mind is made up, to cast my lot for religion with the people who take the Bible for their guide. You may say,"———

She was interrupted by the entrance of her husband.

"Sally," said he, "here is a gentleman come to see you, dear."

The gentleman was Mr. Duff. He had a melancholy and bewildered look, and stopped short on his entrance, as if undecided whether to advance or retreat."

"I only came up to inquire how you are this morning," said he, speaking in a very hurried manner, "and I am glad to see you looking so surprisingly; but as you are engaged with friends, I will not intrude now. Some other time, when you are at leisure, I can give you a call."

"They *are* friends," said she, advancing towards him; "kind and true friends—and none kinder and truer than yourself, Mr. Duff. It would be a strange time, indeed, that you could intrude, or that I could not spare a welcome for you—and remember, Mr. Duff, it will be your own fault, if any thing will happen hereafter, that would divide our friendship of so many years standing."

"We had all better keep our friends while we can," said Costigan, mournfully; "for death will take them from us whether we will or no. I didn't want to tell it to you, dear, till you had left the place, but the cries of the mother won't let it be kept secret—poor Wat Delahunt is just departed."

"Had he his senses in his last hour?" asked Mrs. Costigan, with an anxious look at Mr. Duff.

"No," answered her husband, "not since yourself made the bed for him at two o'clock this morning—but what am I about, forgetting my errand here?—You must go down," said he, turning to Ileen, who had hitherto stood in a corner near the window, gazing stupidly at the crowd below: "Mr. Fitzcarrol wants to take your examinations."

"What business have they with me?" said she, "or what can I tell to give them satisfaction? Will they want me to swear about a dream that just flitted through my memory, and that I disremember how it was? Will they want me to falsify my belief, and say them was in it that couldn't be in it, for even if I seen him there, I must think it was another in his shape? And how could I face all the people there, that has nothing to do but stare at me, and make me a common talk?"

"I know you have nothing to tell, Ileen, but the gentleman must be satisfied. Now is your time, girl. You can cross the place in a minute, without being noticed; for don't you see all the people thronging to the gate?"

"Let me see what is the matter," said she, pressing to the window, and following with her eyes the direc-

tion of his arm, she heaved a long-drawn sigh, and covered her face with her hands, as Connel St. Leger and three other men were led hand-cuffed into the yard.

THE END.